The INVISIBLE GUIDE

C. LEWIS HIND

THE INVISIBLE GUIDE

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

LIFE'S LITTLE THINGS

LIFE'S LESSER MOODS

THE ENCHANTED STONE

ADVENTURES AMONG PICTURES

DAYS WITH VELASQUEZ

DAYS IN CORNWALL

AUGUSTUS SAINT GAUDENS

THE EDUCATION OF AN ARTIST

THE DIARY OF A LOOKER-ON

TURNER'S GOLDEN VISIONS

REMBRANDT

THE POST IMPRESSIONISTS

BRABASON: His Art and Life

THE CONSOLATIONS OF A CRITIC

THE SOLDIER BOY

THE INVISIBLE GUIDE

BY

C. LEWIS HIND

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TO

ONE WHO WORE KHAKI

When you left us—you who were so young, who are so young—I saw in a vision the symbol of the Lamb washing away the sins of the world. For it is the blood of our youth that is saving the world —the Lamb slain yet ever with us, and ever young, as in the crest of the Knights Templars.

The Redcoat, once a sad sign of division, has gone: it has passed with all the world's false apotheosis of war. Khaki is the symbol of this war which must end war—Khaki, so quiet, so implacable: Khaki the reconciler.

How splendid are the rainbow flags of the past enshrined in Churches and Capitols, telling of splendour, pomp—and division.

The flag of the future to be placed in Churches and Capitols will be of Khaki, telling of the unity of the English speaking peoples, who fought side by side for Freedom.

So I place on the cover of this book a Khaki Flag, two Khaki Flags, and beneath, supporting them, is the Cross, the sad, glad emblem of sacrifice and hope. You, best beloved, who wore Khaki, to whom all that follows is dedicated, will, in the ampler life to which you are gone—understand.

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PART I

HIS GUIDANCE BEGINS

THE INVISIBLE GUIDE

I

DAWN ON ROOF HILL

OUR house is among the pines; but lower than Roof Hill.

To reach Roof Hill we must wind through a track in a small wood, a track known to few, upwards to the clearing on the summit. Somebody once thought of building a house there, but desisted after he had made the path and opened the ground. The wide valley beneath is decked with copses, villages, gorse, and a military camp, but all detail is lost from the hill, which is the roof of our little world. We call it Roof Hill.

*   *   *   *   *   *

Does one ever become accustomed to the sudden sight of the moon in the afternoon? I think not. "The moon is up and yet it is not night," said Byron, making poetry of the platitude. Today I saw the afternoon moon. It was when I went into the garden after receiving a long-dis-

tance telephone from the hospital in London saying that Jimmy Carstairs was "as well as could be expected" (he had arrived early in the morning from France). I went into the garden to see if two little flowers of February, a periwinkle and a snowdrop, had survived the frost. They had. That was good because the frost was now gone, and there was in the air a perceptible feeling of spring, a faint warmth and a faint scent. Looking up to see, as it were, whence this caress of spring had come, I saw the rising moon. I saw her and remembered.

What did I remember? Merely a day in high summer (long ago it seems now) when the moon was also near the full. Jimmy Carstairs, the artist, who was under orders to leave with his draft at any moment; Jimmy's brother, the medical student, awaiting his commission in the R.A.M.C., with four Others and myself, had walked up to Roof Hill. There we cooked our evening meal; we watched the moon swing clear of the fir-trees, and we read poetry aloud. Then we sat silent, wondering when we seven would foregather again.

* * * * * *

A few months have passed. Our hope of meeting on Roof Hill seems slight. Jimmy is

badly wounded; Jimmy's brother is in a Cadet Battalion, hoping to spend this week-end with us; one of the Others is a nurse in Salonica, and another is in charge of a recreation hut in France. That leaves three—two of the Others and myself.

* * * * * *

While I was looking from the snowdrop to the moon, and from the moon to the periwinkle, one of the Others approached with a telegram. It was from Jimmy's brother, and it contained one word—"Detained."

Desolation rose like a mist. In dejection we went about our duties, and when darkness fell, and revealed the contrasts of the lighted room within, and the silvery moonlight without,—I said restlessly—"Let us who are left go up to Roof Hill and watch the moon swing clear of the trees."

The thought must have been in their minds also, for they said nothing, but at once collected rugs, and the kettle, and the Kampite outfit, and the torches, for the track through the wood is dark. It was well we brought the torches, for when we reached the top of Roof Hill, the moon was hidden by clouds, and all the sky was a dull, dirty purple.

The moon was hiding. That was the first phase.

Wrapped in rugs huddled around the slight glow from the fire we drank our coffee. Before us were two empty cups, placed ready for Jimmy and his brother. Fond, foolish hope! We talked of our splendid Jimmy, of his readiness, his bravery, his wisdom, then of Jimmy's pictures, those small synthetical, rhythmical, symbolical landscapes, so gay in colour, so naïve in treatment, which I shall always maintain were the parent of the new movement in landscape. Then we spoke of Jimmy himself, of that curious aloofness in his temperament, that something, when you seemed to be on the point of understanding him entirely, which meant loving him entirely, would loom up like a luminous wall. It always seemed to me as if Jimmy had a knowledge which he was not quite ready to impart, which he wanted us to understand without being told.

Talking thus of Jimmy, with love and longing, suddenly the sky became a blaze of light. We started to our feet: then seated ourselves again, but we still gazed at that wonderful sight. The searchlights had suddenly rushed out and up from the military camp at the far end of the

valley, and they were now gambolling with one another in the sky, straight, rapidly moving, spreading pencils of light, now here, now there, leaving puffs of iridescence alone in the blue vault. Soon the searchlights disappeared suddenly as they had come. Again the sky was dark and still, and we noticed that the round moon had broken through the clouds. That was the second phase.

Again we talked of Jimmy, of the sequence of Atmospheric Effects he had painted; and beneath each he had written a bar of music and a few lines of verse in harmony with the atmospheric effect: we spoke of his consistent equability of happiness, in disaster or in success, as if he were initiate in joy and knew how to employ his wisdom whatever discords might arise. While we were talking we were again startled, but this time it was sound, not light, the sound of rapid footsteps. I raised my torch and the glow fell upon the white face of Jimmy's brother advancing quickly towards us. He stopped abruptly and spoke two words—"Jimmy's dead."

* * * * * *

Presently he added—"This afternoon at four o'clock. It was a hopeless case." Again he paused. None of us spoke. He continued:

"It happened at Le Transloy. Jimmy volunteered for patrol-duty because Ashton—you remember Ashton at the studio—could hardly stand for rheumatism. He was shot by a sniper, and while he was being carried back a shell caught him in both legs. It's best so. He couldn't have got well."

Jimmy's brother removed his cap, and blew out a long breath. Then he said, as if he were giving us a piece of news, incredible, but pressing—"Jimmy's dead."

Again we were startled. For away above the military camp a star shell ascended, then another, and another, illuminating the countryside. The star-shells were followed by a cannonade, which gradually increased in violence. "Zeps," said one of the Others. "No," said Jimmy's brother, "Night Ops. They'll stop directly."

Soon the noise ceased, suddenly as the searchlights had been extinguished, and the still sky arched effortless over the trouble of man. So, I suppose, Eternity arches over the noise of Time. The moon had escaped from the clouds. That was the third phase.

We sat by the small fire till past midnight. The glow within the boulders, which we had

piled around, showed no light outside. Wrapped in our rugs we were quite warm.

A curious fancy seized me, a fancy so increasingly insistent that it became a command. It was to go to the edge of the plateau and there to stand sentinel until dawn. I explained my desire. They agreed. I left them huddled in their rugs, talking in whispers and gazing at the minute glow of fire.

* * * * * *

I could see them from the rampart where I stood, for the cold light of the moon was strong. I seemed to be alone in space—nothing between me and Eternity. I spoke aloud, remembering a talk I once had with my friend. This is what I said: "Jupiter is five hundred million miles away. Seeds in the earth, the size of pinheads, are beginning to awaken. Jimmy's dead. Jimmy is safe."

I stood motionless for five minutes watching and listening intently; as I watched and listened this question came to me. I did not seek it; the question came and I uttered it—"Is Jimmy dead?"

Again I stood quite silent, watching and listening. There seemed nobody in the world but me.

I was alone on this inanimate, animate earth, already beginning to stir, with her vast measures of spring, and above were those still stars pursuing their rabid courses. I spoke again—"Jimmy, are you dead?"

Each of these profound pauses between speech and speech was marked by a strange experience, which became stranger and stronger on each occasion. At first it was only a faint consciousness of the presence of Jimmy, as if he had passed me, and left the impression of his nearness. In the next pause it seemed as if he had tarried an instant. In the third pause he was with me. I knew it. I called his name aloud. I talked to him. I entreated.

During the fourth pause my attention wandered, for I was very cold and very fatigued. I thought longingly of the rugs and the bit of fire. In this pause when my attention had wandered his presence was so fugitive that I hardly knew he had been with me. During the next pause I put every fibre of body, every insight of soul into the strict task of watching, as if the whole world were in my keeping, and I God's sentinel. At once my friend was with me. I looked around, and up. The moon was riding high, away from all clouds. That was the fourth phase.

I seemed to have additional sensibilities: to hear without listening, to see without seeing. It was essential to be alone. If anyone had been with me, and had spoken, I should have hated him. But I should have liked music, deep music, such as Beethoven's. Yet why? While I watched and waited in rapt communion, suddenly Jimmy was with me completely. He spoke, but without words.

"There was a poet, who entered into life—I mean the life here, of which death is the gate—a little while before me. Emile Verhaeren was his name, a Belgian, who after the war became changed. He changed when everything in his country cottage in the area of the German advance was captured. This was followed by the devastation of his country. These events made him the poet of revenge. That was right according to your human standards, but wrong, or shall I say useless, from the standpoint of the real life which is our life here. Though a great poet he was not wholly great, because after 1914 he allowed hate to master him. That was the unhappy human view of the mortal Verhaeren. Hate has no reality. Here we prove it. Hate cannot exist beside love, as darkness cannot exist beside light.

"The real Verhaeren, the poet, with whom all that was good in me now coalesces, is the poet whose aim in pre-war life was (one who understood said this of him) 'to overcome existence with undying love.' Later, in one of his plays he returned to this initiate knowledge, and the thesis was that enmity is overcome by goodness. Will man never comprehend this? Why do not states and rulers try Love as individuals try it and succeed? Why does not the world see that hate has failed? Hate failed to maintain peace: it has failed to win battles. Why not try love? It should be undertaken as a business proposition. Would Greece be in a worse state than she is now had she, when pressed, disbanded her army and navy; had her King said—'I am on no side because I am on Love's side. I trust my country to that undying Principle.' Think it out? Can you not see what would have happened? Centuries hence the glory of the Greece of Pericles would have paled before the glory of the Greece of Constantine. The real modern world would have dated from that hour.

"Love must conquer. The world must one day realise this. To that ideal you must cling, pathetically but with passion.

"Love is the conqueror, not hate. The poets

have always known this. Verhaeren knew it. Rupert Brooke knew it. Almost his last message to the world was an assertion of the potency of Love against which all else, even what you call death, is powerless.

"Now is the hour for poets, for all artists. They should sing, paint, carve the praise of Love the Conqueror. They should strive to bring men back to sanity through art. But no art is great unless it is inspired by Love. That is the whole secret of life. There is no other mystery. I now am love. Friend, I pursue you with it. Henceforth I am an agent for the eternal Principle—Love. When me you fly I am the wings. I am with you always—if you will but seek me, know me, and so understand."

The clouds on the horizon began to fall away. The moon was sinking, and there were wisps of mist about her. That was the fifth phase.

Again there was silence. I was moved to immortal longings. I was attuned to an extraordinary response to that voice—silent yet audible.

I had to speak. "Jimmy," I cried entreatingly, "stay with me always!"

Then the voice answered—"This love you have for me will fade, this memory will fade."

"Never!" I cried.

"It will fade, dear friend, because it is founded upon emotion, not upon understanding. You are the victim of the excitement of my loss and the hypnotism of the world's sacrifice. A little while and you will almost forget me. My image will blur. But if Love is really your king there will come a time, it may be soon, it may be late, when something finer, far finer than emotion will possess you, and then you will be really with me."

"What is that?"

"Understanding. When, perhaps years hence, perhaps months, perhaps weeks, you lose emotion and acquire understanding, I shall be always with you, I shall be your Invisible Guide, your Master, as here I am the reflection of my Guide, my Master. His name is Undying Love.

"Jimmy," I shouted.

The moon sailed clear of the mist. She was nearing the horizon. That was the sixth phase.

The trees stood up dark and friendly. All the world was under the spell of a deep harmony. Dawn was beginning. The moon dipped to the horizon—no stain around her anywhere. That was the seventh phase.

* * * * * *

The night had passed. Dawn was at hand. I was relieved. I moved towards the sleepers. They stirred. Jimmy's brother in a huddle of rugs sat up. He looked odd, distraught.

"I dreamt," he said, "that Jimmy wasn't dead."

[*We walked home without speaking. I know not what was in their minds, but as we paced the familiar road, I was so sure of Jimmy's presence that, once, I put out my hand as if to touch him.*]

II

THE SOLDIER-ARTIST SPEAKS

THAT night I sat alone in our house among the pines thinking of Jimmy Carstairs and waiting for his letter.

I looked at some of his pictures, at those Atmospheric Effects, pastels heightened with water-colour, on paper twenty-four inches wide, by twelve inches high, which I had bound into a volume—vivid aspects of nature, extraordinarily free, rhythmic, and pure in colour: on the back of each he had written a bar of music, and a few lines of verse, thus recording his emotion, and adoration, in three arts. How well I remember him saying—"They're one, the three, you know: learn something of the technique of each, then sing. These are attempts, the totterings of a child—but wait!"

When the war broke out he enlisted immediately. He, who had always talked so much, became quiet. He did not explain why he enlisted: he enlisted. Later he sent me a card with a drawing of St. George upon it. Under

the drawing of St. George he wrote: "I have taken the oath to the King. All is plain now. My conscience is in my country's keeping. I have no more doubts, and have ceased to suffer."

While he was in France he took no leave—at least, he never returned to England. I think he avoided any distraction from the solemnity of his oath; but he wrote me a letter each week. Those letters are the narrative of the growth of a spiritual life, confronted with, and in spite of, ghastly material calamities. His last letter reached me a week ago. It ended—"We are under orders. I'll write again on the eve of our battle, so small but so vital to us. I feel quite sure—and safe." Knowing Jimmy I was certain that letter "on the eve of our battle" would be written, and I was also certain that I would receive it. I waited for that letter. It was my right, and I was convinced that it would reach me. I waited patiently, sure of this message from him.

Presently one of the Others entered the room, and said—"Here's a letter for you. Jimmy's brother brought it from the hospital. He found it in Jimmy's tunic."

When I had finished the letter I called the Others, and Jimmy's brother. After we had

read it aloud I placed it in my despatch-case among other precious things. Later I labelled the envelope "The Ideal," because that same night I, by chance, encountered "The Real," and the two statements have become linked together in memory and affection. This is the letter that Jimmy Carstairs wrote to me—his last.

"I have been reading Plato lately, and Rousseau, in bits, during snatched moments, often from sleep. I have learned to do with quite a small amount of sleep, so that I may have the more time for living my real life which, for want of a better term, I call my spiritual life. My body, and all my bodily and mental powers I have given to the King, who represents all that is meant by England—past, present and future. I gave my mind and body willingly and completely, when England first needed men—so there's an end of that.

"In the early days I said to you—'All is plain now.' It's plainer than ever to-day, when the supreme moment, for which my mind and body have been trained, approaches. I'm safe, as Rupert Brooke knew, he who went through it all, 'Safe when men fall. And if these poor limbs die, safest of all,' that is, safe from all

material shocks, because the real me, the reflection of divine love, the vessel of human love, cannot be touched.

"My material life is not my own: it has been given wholly and completely. But my spiritual life is all mine, wholly and completely mine—and God's, wholly and completely God's, because I desire it to be so. That to me is absolutely clear.

"What do I mean when I use the word 'God'? Certainly nothing anthropomorphic: certainly not the God of the Old Testament: certainly not the God of the Kaiser and his pastors, and hardly the God of our British churches. They conceal him in the background of their worship, behind so many subsidiary figures, that I do not feel him near. Mark Wilks, whose chapel I used to attend in my youth, was one of the few I have known who seemed to understand in his extempore prayers, the absolute spirituality of God.

"What do I mean when I use the word 'God'? I mean the Principle of Goodness, the all of the spiritual world which hides, yet which is so very close if we care to seek the door. It opens to everyone—to Kings or to curs. That's the true democracy, true justice. There's no justice in the material world. That has always

been so plain to me, that it's not worth arguing. Man tries to make the material world just—that's all. The spiritual world is our real home. That was the heart of Christ's teaching. The door is always open. In we must go one day, from this world or from other worlds, whether we want to or not. Ultimately this Principle of Goodness must draw everything to itself—Arcturus and Neptune, England and Germany, Syria and Surrey, you and me. Gleams of this Love, this God, this Principle of Goodness, this active spiritual world are always appearing, and the odd thing is that when they appear all venerate and admire the apparitions, saint and sinner, Catholic and Quaker, soldier and civilian.

"The Principle that wins for a man the V.C. is an expression of it as is the Principle that, in the Air Service, has restored chivalry; the Principle that makes a mother say to her boy 'Go,' and a sweetheart to cry to her lover 'Be gone'; the Principle that prompts a man, on a wet night in the Borough, to give up his seat to a tired woman; the Principle that enables me in the horror and shame of this world-war to be unafraid, unvexed, and confident. We have lots of names and phrases for this Principle—

patriotism, 'playing the game,' honour—but all mean one thing—God.

"This Principle which rules in the Spiritual World 'functions eternally.' To use it, even slightly, banishes fear, and makes me do my duty as perfectly as I can. I fight, to the full power of my mind and body, not to please this Principle of Goodness, oh, no, a thousand times no! but because I have taken my oath. I have made the great sacrifice. It was in the act of making it that I functioned with Principle. I am an artist. I hate violence. My sacrifice was as complete as Jesus Christ's. I did it because I felt compelled to help pay for, and to participate in, the awful but temporary failure of civilisation, which this war is. War, I said inwardly, when I took my oath, is horrible, essentially wicked, absolutely anti-God, but I fight because I am alive at this moment, and I want to share in the anxiety and agony of my fellows, and because England drew the sword for the right, and can gain nothing from the conflict. I fight because we must see it through, I fight so that future generations may be spared a repetition of the awful payment we are making for failure.

"I said just now that the Principle of Good

functions continually. Strange things happen out here, strange spiritual apparitions emerge amid our bloody work. I was knee-deep in a trench half full of mud and filth, bits of the dead all around, and what do you think a machine-gunner said while he was wiping the muck from his hands. He looked at the dead, some were his pals, and he said 'They're now functioning with God.'

"The words were hardly out of his mouth when there happened, what he would call 'a bit of a scrap' with the enemy, an episode, the mere sight of which in pre-war days would have driven me mad. When peace (terms are relative) was restored, I expressed surprise at his remark, 'Oh,' he said, 'that's all right. You'll know what I mean, you're a mystic.' Am I? Perhaps I am. The idea gave me infinite pleasure, to think that I am one of that initiate confraternity which was old when the Morning Stars shouted for joy.

"We were detailed for bombing that night. Can you realise what bombing means—what it means to me who in sane days could not even put an old diseased dog out of his misery? I must have killed several of my fellow-men, and on the way back, splashing through the dark,

I murmured these—what do you call them?—aphorisms?

> 'Mysticism is the language of the heart.'
> 'Symbolism is the language of the eyes.'
> 'Allegory is the language of the fancy.'

"Now, old friend, I approach what I will call Reality, by which I mean that this ghastly material world in which I now live is the dream, and the spiritual world is the Reality. I will tell you the profoundest conviction of my life, the faith in which I shall die, which explains the relation, or rather the absolute lack of relation, of God to this silly war, and to all other evils, great and small.

"I said at the beginning of this letter that I had been reading Plato and Rousseau in bits. You know what those bits are. They are the extracts that in past happy days of reading and reflecting I copied into the note-book that I keep always with me, extracts on one page, not always entirely grasping their full import at the time, and my diary on the other side. Last night, perusing my note-book by candle-light in our dug-out (poor Ashton was lying by my side racked with rheumatism, and one finger blown off), I

came upon this. Suddenly its full meaning overwhelmed me. I could have shouted for joy. The passage was this, from Plato's *Republic*, Book II—'As to asserting that God, who is good, becomes the author of evil to any, we must do battle uncompromisingly for the principle that fictions conveying such a doctrine as this shall neither be received nor heard in the city . . . because such language may not be used without irreverence, and is moreover both injurious to us and self-contradictory.'

"The second passage is the opening of Rousseau's *Emile*. Here it is in all its stark truthfulness—'God makes all things good; man meddles with them and they become evil.'

"Do you grasp the truth that these statements, in part, if not in whole, imply? It is that God has nothing to do with this war, with 'the unspeakable agonies of the Somme,' with the sorrow and distress, virtually, in every home of the civilised (my heart! civilised!) world. This colossal evil is entirely man-made, and as man, tinctured with fear and greed, made it, he must find the cure. No nation is altogether blameless; all are deeply coloured or faintly tinged with greed and fear. I would apportion the blame for this unspeakable catastrophe thus—

Germany eighty per cent., Russia fifteen per cent., Great Britain five per cent. But for the sake of eternal righteousness and common fairness, let us leave God, the Principle of Goodness, out of it. He, being spirit, is cognisant of spiritual things only. Nothing to me in the whole catastrophe is so nauseating as the published utterances of the German pastors in their attempts to prove that God is a German God, a kind of glorified Kaiser, and my heart sinks when I read of the efforts of certain of our own churches to explain that God has willed this war as a schoolmaster wields a cane over a naughty schoolboy. If that were so, the sights I have seen out here, the sights I see daily, would make me resent His overtures, flee from Him, if ever in some future state, hardly to be imagined, I were summoned to His Presence.

"Those utterances by Plato and Rousseau confirmed me in a belief that I have long, long dimly held, and now see plainly. It is quite simple. I will state it in a few words. God is not only, not the author of evil. He, being perfection, is ignorant of evil, in the same way as a child, innately good, is ignorant of evil. It is there, but the child, being pure, being like God, evades it because he is unconscious of it.

Therefore evil has no real existence, the child touches it not. Christ, who knew everything, knew this, meant this, when he said—'Of such is the Kingdom of Heaven.' Under the light of this new knowledge how new a meaning illumines the old texts such as—'Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God.'

"I am well aware that this knowledge is not new, it is probably as old as man—'God made all things good; man meddles with them and they become evil.' This was the root-knowledge of Christ's insight into the spiritual world: that was the essence of Mrs. Eddy's rediscovery of Christ's Christianity—this knowledge that God is ignorant of evil, and that man when and where he likes can leave evil, harmonise with God, and be safe and happy.

"You will have noticed in this letter several references to Christ. He possesses me. More and more, every day, the thought of Him fills my mind and heart. Yet I was brought up as a Unitarian under that real Christian and good journalist, P. W. Clayden, and also under the written and spoken influence of that seer-saint James Martineau. I am a Unitarian and something more, for I believe all the miracles. That sounds a paradox, but it's quite simple really.

Everyone, I suppose, admits that there are spiritual forces working in this world, and that by using them rightly material forces have occasionally been conquered, indeed, surprising victories have sometimes been achieved. I suppose most people possess about one per cent. of spirituality. On rare occasions of initiation they may have more. Let us allow that the highest amount of spirituality in man, from the beginning of his existence on this earth, has never exceeded ten per cent. One man must be excluded from this assumption. That man was Jesus the Christ. I suggest that he possessed ninety per cent. of spirituality. With such a comprehensive knowledge of spiritual laws, that must necessarily be superior to material laws, as the mind of the potter is superior to the clay it controls, anything is possible—the so-called miracles ascending to the final demonstration of victory over death. I suppose we can only attain to the smallest degree of spirituality through effort, stress, and sorrow. 'By the thorn path and none other is the Mount of Vision won.' That's man's fault again. He's always eating the wrong apple, consequently he is always trying to get the taste out of his mouth and striving to restore his palate. Christ, when he was

fogged, knew that his slight failure was due to the ten per cent. of spirituality that he lacked. How strange it is that the two acutest, most enquiring and most rationalistic of modern minds —George Bernard Shaw, and George Moore— have each, in their latest books, devoted the maturity of their thought and insight to the subject of Christ. Ninety per cent. of spirituality —that's the secret of the endless, infinite fascination of Christ.

"And, if you consider it, spiritually, we have already won this war. I could prove this by two parallel columns of type. In the first column I would print brief utterances made during the *first three months* of the war by official, high-placed Germans, announcing authoritatively the first intentions of Germany in the world-conflict. In the second column I would place statements by the same officials made during the *past three months*. What a change! What a contrast! In the early days their cry was for world-dominion: now their cry is for the defence of the Fatherland.

"Adieu, dear friend. You have listened to me patiently. Will the world never realise that Love, not hate, is the motive power—the love that moves the sun and stars. So runs my

dream. . . . Oh, I had a strange, beautiful dream last night. I dreamt that I had passed out of this hell, and that suddenly everything was inexpressibly peaceful, still and lovely. I found myself in the green meadow of which Plato (I think) speaks, where the spirits of those who have tried to follow Principle in their earth-life wait, not being yet ready for the presence of God. In that green meadow I met him who has been to me all, and more, than Virgil was to the ancient and medieval schoolmen. I mean, of course, Turner. He, in his earth-life, you know, almost jeered at Ruskin's suggestion that there was much more in his paintings than he intended. Turner said—'I painted,' as the wind might say 'I blew,' or a stone that is cast into a pond, making endless ripples, might say 'I was thrown.' But here in this meadow Turner understood, and he said to me, 'There was much in my earth-work beyond mere painting. It came when I was in communication not with man, but with light, with the sun, and that was all the best of my work, because it was God working through me."

"So runs my dream, but what am I? It is my prayer that this letter may stir someone to right-thinking about the war, and about Him Who is

in everything, but not in the evil of it. Adieu, dear friend! I'll write to you again—if ever I write again."

* * * * * *

I was re-reading this letter, after the Others had left the room, when suddenly there came a tap at the window. I glanced towards the blind. The rapping was repeated. I walked towards the door and cried—"Who is it?"

[*While I waited with my hand on the knob of the door I had an inexplicable prescience, not only that Jimmy Carstairs was with me at the moment, smiling as only he could smile—his slow, sweet, comprehensive smile—but also that, if I thought aright, and demonstrated, he, my Invisible Guide, would remain with me according to my desire.*]

III

THE SOLDIER-PACKER SPEAKS

A JOLLY voice answered—"All right, sir." Then a man in the dress of a wounded soldier emerged from the sleet and the darkness, and said cheerily, "Sorry, governor, but I've lost my way. I want the Hill Hospital."

I drew him indoors, warmed his damp body, and, as the Hill Hospital is three miles across country, realised that I must accompany him. He was not drunk, but the liquor that he had imbibed had dulled his perceptions, and enhanced the attraction of a walk through the cheerless night. He was quite indifferent to the fact that he dripped rain, and that he would be punished for exceeding his leave by several hours. "Nothing matters so long as I'm back in Old England," he trolled as we splashed through a puddle in the garden path,—"Egypt was all right, but France—O Lord! O Lord! My sector in La France was a bit too thick, take it from me—a bit too thick. I was inoculated in Egypt, I was, six times for six diseases, 'cludin' dysan-

terry, and I never got one of them, straight, I didn't. And I drank anyfink—water as well. Why, we used to drag the dead beasties out of the wells with grapplin'-irons. Mind you, I 'ad some good times in France. There was a week I 'ad in Amiens when I was billetted with a wine merchant—a proper gent, he. He was a good sort, and his missus called me 'Bon Tommy.' They weren't sparin' with the gargle, neither! Oh, the wine's all right, but the French beer! strike me, I wouldn't water cabbages with it."

Suddenly he turned full face to me. Hitherto he had been walking a yard ahead, throwing his remarks over his left shoulder.

"See! That's what I got in France!"

He bared his arm, and exposed a ghastly wound, apparently healed, extending from shoulder to wrist.

"Jammy sight, ain't it? I got that carrying a aerial torpedo to a drain full o' water, what we calls a trench, four of us was carrying it, and I thought my arm was gone when the shell burst, no farther off than that telegraph-pole."

He ran up the bank to the pole to emphasise the distance. As we had still a long way to go I suggested that he should husband his strength.

"You'll over-tire yourself," I said. By way of reply he executed what I presume was a clog-dance on the slippery summit of the bank. "Tired? I don't get tired walking about England. When you get tired is when you carry ammunition up to the Front, four hundred of us carrying it for fourteen days. That's when you get tired, governor—and proud too. But d' you know what I'm proudest of all the time I was in France? We was in a captured trench, and we 'ad to get out of it, and over it, quick, and it was full of German dead and dying, and I didn't walk on one of their faces—no, not one. That's what I'm proudest of. Oh, a soldier's life ain't a bad life. . . . What? What? *Does I want to go back?*"

I had asked him that foolish question. My excuse is that I was numbed with cold, and stupid through lack of sleep. Wisdom was frozen out of me.

He sat down, literally sat down, upon the wet road, rocking with laughter. Then he turned over on his side and roared again. I picked him up. Again he exploded with laughter—"'Op it, mate, or I shall die of laughin'! What! Go back?"

Suddenly he became serious. He clutched

my arm. "It's mur-r-der, it's mur-r-der, I tell you; that's what it is: but it's got to be gone through, and it's my job, and we've got to crush the 'Uns, so as our kids may 'ave a decent life. The job's got to be done, and it ain't cricket to do it bad, and I do it as well as I can, same as I packed the parcels in the shop. But it ain't war—it's mur-r-der, and when I see the shell comin' that got me in the arm, I was tickled to death, that I was, tickled to death to think that I was going to get killed and be out of it."

"But I wasn't killed, as you see. I dunno why I wasn't. I lay there for seven mortal hours, and while I was on the ground groaning some of our chaps came up, and then they couldn't go on, and they couldn't go back, 'cause of the barrage. Some of 'em was R.C.'s, and there was a priest among 'em. My! he was a good 'un, and while they was there they said what they call Mass—we calls it receivin' the Holy Communion—at least them do as does it. Funny sight, I promise you, to see them all a-praying there, and yet, I dunno, it seemed all right, and while they was prayin' I said a sort of prayer. I said—'O God, I'm a bad 'un and you're a good 'un, so make me good, and spare my life for Jesus Christ, His sake. Amen.'

"Then they all went to sleep, those that weren't dead or on sentry-go, and I thought of the old mother, and one of the R.C. chaps woke up, and I asked him what this Mass business really meant, and he told me, and I guess that there are worse things than that for a soldier. I said so to 'im, and he said—'You're only a bit right, old sport, because it's the only thing when you're living in a 'ell upon earth!' And then he told me of poetry that someone had written, how at Agincourt the soldiers hadn't got any bread and wine so they used a blade of grass. Funny! Yet I dunno. I expect He up there understood and took it in the right way.

"Oh, this is my 'orspital, is it? I don't think I'll go in. I likes walking about England, it's just restin'." He passed the hospital gates and wandered up the lane, and as he went I heard him declaiming to the patient trees—"Want to go back. Lord love me, want to go back! But it's got to be done, and I guess God 'll look after those who do it well. Blade o' grass! Funny sort of euchre-euchre-eucharist—yet I dun-no—"

* * * * * *

Is there so much difference between these presentments of the Ideal and the Real, between the

Soldier-Artist and the Soldier-Packer? Is there so much difference between Rousseau's "God makes all things good; man meddles with them and they become evil," and Katharine Tynan's

> When there is no sacrifice,
> Bread and Wine for thy disguise;
> Come thou in the Spirit then
> As at Agincourt our men
> With desire a blade of grass
> Served as Eucharist and Mass.

Each implies an Ultimate Good which is waiting and willing.

Is there so much difference between the Soldier-Artist and the Soldier-Packer? Each has taken his oath: each realises that it was taken for the good of those who come after. Each has a faith—one a star, the other a candle, different in degree, not in kind—that's all. "And," I added, "Jimmy's star shines still . . . Jimmy!"

[*Then the Invisible Guide answered—"The test of religion is—life. All men have religion, but some see its value and cultivate it. I was born under a star; the Soldier-Packer under a candle. You flicker, and flame, and flicker from one to the other."*]

IV

THE VETERANS

IT was some time later. I was growing accustomed to the presence of my Invisible Guide, but I had not mentioned the joy to anybody, not even to my old friend the Major, who had been staying with me.

His leave was ending. We rose: we had left ourselves a margin before catching the train at the wayside station. For we wanted the walk to be leisurely, the old familiar walk through the wood and across the moor—the country way, we called it. We had much to say, before parting.

And we wished to call for the Major's servant at the village inn, known for two hundred years as "The Hop Pole," bordering on an orchard, and half hidden in a sand-pit. He was a corporal, united to his master by an indissoluble bond. They belong to the Expeditionary Force that went to France in August, 1914: they are of that remnant, that little group of heroes, scat-

tered, but eternally united. How proud I am to be the friend of these veterans.

The Major stretched his long limbs. "We must be going," he said briskly. "Hulloa, where's your Harpignies?" He referred to a small watercolour by the great French landscape-painter, who was the last survivor of the famous school of artists known as "The Men of 1830." It is my prize possession, and it used to hang above my desk.

He struck a match. "Why——" he began. His eyes glistened.

In its place now hangs a picture, or a symbol, of one of "The Men of 1914." It is called "Wipers." The artist is "Snaffle," and it shows a Tommy, bare-headed, war-bedraggled, alert, erect. There is blood on his bandaged right hand, and his gun, resting on his left shoulder, carries a German helmet pierced by Tommy's bayonet. He is stern and ready for the future: he is not chuckling over his victory. In his belt where a sword would rest is a trench spade, and in the background is the burnt and battered Cloth Hall. It is not a picture of an individual soldier; it is a symbol of the men who saved Ypres—and us.

"We were all there," said the Major. "Billy,

he's going strong, and Jimmy's brother is, I hope, fit 'somewhere in France'; I, well, I'm a doctor, so I mustn't be ill; and Jimmy Carstairs, that great artist whom Fate made a great soldier—Jimmy's gone west." The Major removed his cap. "Carstairs," he said quite simply, "is 'functioning with God.' He taught me that phrase. He taught me a lot of things about the spiritual world which so many of us, to our great hurt, don't explore. They came to him, he would say, through the Inner Memory. Poor Jimmy—yet, he's more alive to me now than ever he was out in France, or before. He made himself efficient in both worlds, the material and the spiritual. He was an A1 artist, an A1 soldier of the King, and an A1 soldier of Christ. What does Shakespeare say—he said most things—something about somebody who gave his body to his country, and his pure soul unto his Captain Christ under Whose banner he had fought so long. Odd, eh?"

As we walked down the lane I said, "I didn't show you what I had pasted on the back of that 'Wipers' picture. It was an extract from one of your letters written months ago."

The Major looked curiously at me. He hates to appear important.

"What you said was this. You wrote: 'Remember it was at Ypres we saved England. She was our Verdun on a smaller scale. Twice Ypres barred the way to Calais, and to an ultimate menace of our coasts.' "

"That's perfectly true," said the Major, gravely. "And one of the chief heroes of Ypres was our Billy, who is now playing the fool, and I am afraid drinking all he can get, down at the 'Hop Pole' in the valley. People talk about the effect of war on the soldier. Pooh! External things don't really affect anybody. All change must come from within, from the spiritual, from the Inner Memory. War intensifies—that's all. It made Carstairs more spiritual, and more efficient materially, that goes with real spirituality; it makes me more philosophical, and our Billy—it just makes him more Billyish. We three are all what we were; the only difference is that we run on top speed, and our engines are silent."

"But," said I, "leaving his wife and children, and, the thought of the trenches in a day or two will surely affect Billy. He is human, and he must feel serious, as we do."

"Try," said the Major. "When we arrive at the 'Hop Pole' you just listen a minute outside

the bar-parlour door. We'll make it a test case. Let us judge Billy's change of heart by the first remark we hear from his lips."

We passed the orchard, picked our way through the inn garden, and listened. Above the babble of talk and laughter we distinctly heard Billy's broad mid-Yorkshire voice say, "Johnny Walker, and a splash, miss."

When we entered, he disentangled, with incredible rapidity, his arm from the waist of a young woman, and came to the salute with the precision of a semaphore.

As we crossed the moor to the station, Billy marching a few spaces behind, and a searchlight playing about in the tail of the Great Bear, I said to the Major: "Explain yourself, old friend, about the spiritual world and Captain Christ."

"It's quite simple. Jimmy taught me. The spiritual world is the real world, and will ultimately be victorious, because it's eternal, and this fighting folly is temporary. Get even a peep into the spiritual world, and you fear nothing—not even loss. This is what I believe. Jimmy taught me. He had about five per cent. of spiritual knowledge, so he could do a little. Christ had about ninety per cent., so he could do

almost anything; so Christ became Jimmy's Captain.

"See, there's his picture, the one he called 'Glimmer and Mass'—that old barn of a factory, as ugly and menacing as anything can be: but isn't the glimmer that comes through the shaded windows lovely? Jimmy made a picture of that, a mighty fine picture—'Glimmer and Mass' —the mass of the material, the glimmer of the spiritual. Oh, Jimmy isn't dead; he can't die. He goes with us into the future, and I'm quite happy."

[*Walking home two reflections haunted me. One was sad, the other glad. One was that Jimmy's presence was not as vivid to me as it had been: the other was that the Major was still being led by our Invisible Guide.*]

V

TWO TRAINS

IN such a train Jimmy had come home. That ardent spirit, that keen brain brought to this —a wreck. O man, man!

*   *   *   *   *   *

The month of May! The long, light evenings in country lanes and by village-greens; the lovely lavishment of spring, her blossoms and her scents. Oh, the peace of it all! Cattle winding homeward over a green hill, fields of buttercups splashed with bluebells, birds, and the quiet, luminous sky—peace—yes, the peace that God gives to man, His peace, passing understanding.

One of the Others and I walked towards the railway station on our return from a visit: a blackbird sang. We picked a May garland blossom, twined it with laburnum, and we said, of course—"Who would think that the world is at war?" And I was thinking—"How Jimmy would have loved this spring."

The train was late. The little station, a toy affair, was immersed in deeper peace even than

the country-side. Gnats floated above the name of the station written in flowers upon a green bank. The trees were still; there was no sound but the cry of a decadent cuckoo, no movement but the distant smoke of our train trailing above an orchard. It approached leisurely. We gathered our flowers together and waited, happy, grateful for this interlude of intensive peace.

The station-master, with a dog at his heels, strolled from his office. The train approached the station. Suddenly I said, "Why, it is not going to stop!"

It did not. Slowly it passed the platform. It disappeared. We sat down—overcome. We could have cried. We are not iron; we are not trained to fortitude. Into the moment of peace eternal, horror had cut. And pity—which remained. Who has not learned in these days that "Pity, as an emotion, passes; pity, as a motive, remains"?

It was a new train, brilliantly smart, brilliantly lighted, and on the sides was painted the Red Cross, betokening maimed bodies and trained healers. Man's crimson sign affronted the serenity of Nature. As the train went slowly past we saw all—the ashen wounded, many in their uniforms, lying so still, one stretcher above

another, with a little space between. The heads of some were swathed, the eyes of some were fixed on their England, and at the end of this train of suffering was the shining operating-theatre, and in it were figures bending over something.

The station-master saw this twentieth century invention through, and made a note in his pocket-book. "Your train will be twenty-five minutes late," he said. "Owing to—that?" I murmured. He nodded. "We've had four ambulance trains through in the last two hours. Some of 'em was fighting this morning."

"And can you stand this continuous tragedy?" I asked. The tragedy, I soon learnt, was obliterated in the duties of his job. By way of reply to my question, he told me all that this little station, with its name picked out in flowers upon the green bank, was doing in the great war. It had suffered wild changes, and each change found it ready for any emergency. I could not remember, even if I was allowed to repeat them, all the statistics and transit schemes about which he told me; but I realised that he was happy because he was busy. Each minute its duty—that is happiness. It was his business to get the wounded safely past his station on the way to

London, and to get us away too, which he did when, at last, our late, misfit train arrived.

But the poetry had gone from the evening. Our flowers looked faded. Through the spring twilight that flaring, crimson train with its cargo of broken youth had passed, and the serenity of spring was stained by the madness of man. I brooded as we passed through the warm, coloured end of day, catching scents of herb and flower, and slowly, slowly the peace of Nature (ever faithful) again asserted itself, and I became almost glad knowing that man, the broken and the whole, has a City of Refuge, against which no earthly assaults can prevail. But the pass-word to that city is not "I brood." The pass-word is "I work." That the station-master knew. He does not ask, "Why, O God, why?" His question is, "What's the next job?"

So I was sane again and serene when the train reached the terminus—the dark station, but cheerfully active. The ambulance train had come and gone; but all through the night the great station is open and seething with life—happy life when the leave trains come in, quieter but still happy life when the morning leave train goes out. I saw war-gains there—the busy, smiling women in their floating white caps and

blue dresses, modern ministering angels; the military police, bland men who mother boys—and there were the soldier-boys themselves, who had already begun to foregather, ready for the departure of the leave train at 7:50 the following morning. They are well looked after through the night. England sees to that.

An hour passes. The numbers increase. They are a race apart, these bronzed, smiling boys, civilians turned into soldiers, carrying their wardrobes on their backs, "going out" gaily ("nothing clean about them but their guns and their eyes," said one who had watched them coming out of the trenches). They are consecrated. "They shall not grow old, as we that are left grow old." They are eternally young like the spring, and like the spring they are happy because they are doing, carrying on.

I wait. I watch them. I will not be sad. I say with the poet:

> Let me live on! I only ask to live
> Until the war be ended, and I see
> What is the Verdict that the Heavens give
> To Wrong and Fraud and Force and Treachery.

Let me live on, if only to see our Soldier Boys come home garlanded—peace with honour.

Let me live on, learning to blot out the past with its losses and laments; learning to live acutely and actively in the present, and for the future to meet it indifferently—with prescience and with prayer. Let me live on to find "my dear England greater than she knew," because she fought fairly for a cause, not for conquest.

So I blot out the memory of that Red Cross train. To brood is useless; but each morning at 7.50, when the leave train starts, can we not all, wherever we are, quietly, joyfully, with uplifted hearts, send to it our invisible thoughts, and our wordless prayers? Soldiers, your leave train, going out at 7.50 each radiant morning, does not go alone from England.

[*Said the Invisible Guide—"All religion and philosophy is in three words, 'God is Love.' To that a man of our time added a postscript—'Only the Infinite Pity is sufficient for the Infinite Pathos of human life.'"*]

VI

THE STRANGER

I AWOKE early that lovely summer morning, woke to a consciousness, without effort, that Jimmy was with me. From the book-case behind the bed I picked a little bound copy of the Epistle to the Romans that he had given to me. Opening it I read "Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be likeminded one toward another according to Christ Jesus."

* * * * * *

One of my visitors that summer day was a wounded soldier from the Ypres salient, the other was a flying-man who had fallen three hundred feet. He is still lame, but mending.

We purposed spending the afternoon in Marion's garden (she is a mother to all soldiers and sailors), and I wanted to show them some wonderful gradations of blues—ranging from deep delphinium, through anchusa to pale catmint. But the hill was steep. So we rested. Some kind soul has placed benches on the ascent: painted on the back of each is a small red cross.

We gazed down into the valley, swooning in heat, and in the midst stood the square grey church tower flying a militant flag. "I like to see that," said the soldier.

These men were pious. Once a sneering term, that word has now been restored to its proper place. It means that through the awful chambers of transitory things they had held to spiritual truths and kept the key. Being pious, they nursed "the unconquerable hope." And they had learnt, easier to the simple-minded than to the complex, the new-old discovery evolved, among many others, by Silvanus Thompson—that spiritual truths are to be apprehended by spiritual processes only.

We stared at that grey old church tower with the militant flag, and talked of symbolism and creeds, and of the aid they are to many; but we had learnt that real help can neither be seen, nor touched, nor expressed. We agreed that you cannot symbolise the spirit, any more than you can paint the wind. Man can but express what the spirit does, and note where the wind blows. We talked. They were unafraid of reciting spiritual adventures. It is a mistake to suppose that wounded soldiers are interested only in the frolic of "Razzle Dazzle" or the fun

of the "Bing Boys." My friends belonged to the new religion, although by profession one is a High Churchman, the other a Quaker. (Monsignor Benson, we are told, loved, outside his own communion, High Churchmen best, and next to them Quakers.) What is the new religion? Let me quote M. Pierre Decourcelle: "A new religion has sprung up for us, the churches of which are underground. The priests of this new religion are dressed in khaki or in blue, and there is not a sceptic nor an atheist among them. We all have a blind, passionate faith in our eternal, luminous and unconquered France. . . ." That is a Frenchman speaking. Change the word France into God, and the Englishman speaks. What's in a name? Each has a luminous and unconquered Faith. Each knows, each man in khaki or in blue knows, that he is fighting, and if necessary dying, for something unseen, but everlasting; that this something is good, that it has been active through the ages, and that it beats at the heart of the world. But the message of the ages seemed to us, just then, rather muddled.

Then the Stranger appeared. He paused in our midst. Somehow neither the Soldier nor the Flying Man, nor myself were shy in his un-

solicited presence. He was what the Italians call *simpatica;* he seemed to understand. "He's like an old friend," the Flying Man whispered to me. And, as the Stranger talked, the message of the ages was no longer muddled. It was plain. He seemed to distil all our doubts down to a simple essence. And that essence was serenity.

Suddenly the sorry world cut in upon us. We watched the boy creeping up the hill. He was in blue. "Marine Gunner," said the Soldier, and he cried aloud, "Here, mate, come and rest." The boy sat down. He stared vacantly at the quiet sky. He seemed dazed.

"Have a cigarette?" said the Flying Man, offering his silver case. "I'll take a Woodbine," answered the Marine Gunner, slowly. "You've got something on your chest," said the Soldier. "Out with it, mate." "I was in the big sea fight," said the Marine Gunner. Then he paused. "It was a Great Victory," he shouted. "My ship sank three Germans. My battery fired the first angry shot. But it was a Great Victory. We wondered why there wasn't flags when we came home."

He stared at the grassy hill, the Woodbine, unlighted, between his fingers. "I became

stretcher-bearer," he added. "I helped to carry my pals below. Our ship had a bad list, and there was water up to our knees, and blood and bits everywhere. I see the *Queen Mary* sink, and a Zepp go down where she foundered. Now I've finished talking about it. I just want to look at country things and be quiet. See that blackbird. His colour's lamp-black. There ain't no glisten on his plumage. It's fine. But . . . I'm kind of dazed. It was 'ell, but it was a great victory, I tell you. All my pals gone."

He looked at us like an animal at bay, and in his eyes there was moisture that might have become tears. The Soldier tried to comfort him, but failed. "It's shock you've got," he said.

The Stranger moved closer to the Marine Gunner.

Then with a wonderful subtlety of apprehension, the Flying Man said: "Let's search for honeysuckle. It's about time for it now." We strolled away, leaving the Stranger and the Marine Gunner alone. When we returned, after an interval of ten minutes, the boy was changed. He was comforted. His eyes had quite lost their hunted look. He smiled, and prepared to stride

down the hill. "My leave's up to-night," he remarked, cheerily.

"Now," I said, "we'll proceed to Marion's garden, have tea, and look at those blue flowers." It was odd, but I did not think it necessary to explain the invitation to the Stranger. We strolled together across the common, and although I have a perfect visual memory of that walk, and although I remember the purport of the words that were spoken, I am unable to repeat them. One thing I do remember, because the lines were familiar to me. As we turned into the lane between two conifers, the Stranger was saying: "As one of your poets has written:

"I press God's lamp close to my breast; its splendour,
soon or late,
Will pierce the gloom."

What we each felt profoundly, for each of the men told me privately afterwards, was the sense the Stranger gave us of the tremendous importance of the effort of the humble individual towards goodness. He made us feel that only in that way could peace and love ever rule the world; that if each man and woman, without fuss, without fear, purged of self, without hope of reward, was doing God's work, then such in-

dividuals, gradually growing in number and influence, would raise to the level of the individual —the home, the village, the town, the city, the State, the nations, the wide world. We, if we be lifted up; we, if we demonstrate silently, but frankly, the eternal superiority of spiritual over physical force, will draw all men unto us. And as the Stranger discoursed the message of the ages became plain.

We reached the garden gate. But the Stranger did not enter. He bade us good-bye in silence, and passed on down the lane. We looked long at the blue flowers—the delphinium, the anchusa, and the catmint. I broke the silence. I could not help it. "Well, what are you thinking about?" I asked. The Soldier looked at the Flying Man. There was wisdom in his glance, and he said . . . Yes, he said just what I expected him to say. He said: "Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way?"

[*The Invisible Guide smiled—his old, slow understanding smile. I said aloud:*

"Yes! Sometimes on the instant all seems plain,
The simple sun could tell it, or the rain."

VII

THE SCULPTOR'S VISION

WHENEVER I hear of, or talk to, a Soldier-Artist I think of Jimmy. Who can tell the agonies that convert the Artist into a Fighter? Learning to destroy is hard when you have been all your life learning to create.

* * * * * *

The sculptor had lost his right hand in France; he had also been gassed, the result being that his lungs are behaving oddly. Bandaged, sore, and sullen, he sat upon the seashore at Margate—recuperating.

The day was one of those still, sunny mornings when life seems a gift and the future a near delight. But the sculptor would not invite joy. He tossed the morning paper aside. "It's a pretty grim world," he growled, "and what will my work say to this?" indicating his handless arm. With his left hand he began, sadly yet viciously, to model the damp sand into a small torso.

"You'll find compensations," I interposed

feebly, "and, who knows, your joy (it works in circles, you know), may, at this moment, be returning to you. Here are your letters, and a book I've just received from America. Now I'm going to send off a telegram."

I went about my business, did it, and then strolled into a certain place, long known but never visited before. There I had a surprising and delightful experience. Joy returned to me on a rush of wings. I spent an hour of so of supreme pleasure; I saw the vision splendid, and this miracle happened at "The Hall by the Sea" at Margate.

I returned to the sculptor brimming with the desire to share my enthusiasm; but, to my astonishment, he also was inviting joy. His eyes shone, and he hailed me with the words: "I say, that's a bully book you left with me, a real human book, short but packed with encouragement and hope. It's quite bucked me up, restored my pluck. I must get a copy of 'Why We Love Lincoln,' by James Creelman. Now I understand all about Lincoln, and why John Hay could write thus of him: 'As, in spite of some rudeness, Republicanism is the sole hope of a sick world, so Lincoln, with all his foibles, is the greatest character since Christ.' What a say-

ing! It formulates at once the Ideal Statesman. That Lincoln was. Why does America love Lincoln? Creelman answers that. It is, he says, because 'in the secret recesses where every brave man communes with the highest, bravest and most unselfish elements of his own nature, the average American is an Abraham Lincoln.' That's true—we needs must love the highest when we see it. And the strange thing is that this uncouth man who saved his country; this farm lad, six foot and four inches before he was seventeen, who made his first speech in flax and tow-linen pantaloons, and who said: 'If elected I shall be thankful; if not, it will be all the same'; this national hero, dead but ever-present —I've seen him."

"Seen him? What do you mean?"

"Ah, that's the mystery of art. I've seen the spirit of him, the unconquerable spirit, and the goodness of him, rooted and grounded in love, that's why his people still love him; I've seen him clad in that badly-made frock-coat, and those baggy black trousers, with that lion head and the eyes of a seer-saint, humorous, yet so sad—I've seen him." "Please be explicit," I remarked.

"It was when I was last in America, just before the war, and this book brings it all in a

rush back to me. I had sought out the work of Augustus Saint Gaudens, a great sculptor, who dipped classicism in a bath of springtime, and gave it a shining garment, new, yet old. He and Donatello can meet as friends across the centuries. I had seen Saint Gaudens' *Sherman*, and his *Shaw*, and his *Farragut* and his *Adams* monument, and that lovely low-relief tablet to Whistler at West Point, ornamented with a laurel wreath, and the butterfly, and on either side two flaming Greek torches; and between them the Master's own immortal words—'The story of the beautiful is already complete, hewn in the marbles of the Parthenon, and broidered with the birds upon the fan of Hokusai.' Yet I was ill content until I had gone to Chicago to see Saint Gaudens' *Lincoln*. That was a great moment. I saw the real, ideal Lincoln, standing, addressing an audience, the uncouth body vivified by the spirit. It's a miracle, and the sculptor has surrounded the low pedestal upon which Lincoln stands (Stanford White helped in that) with a circular stone exedra, sixty feet across, suggesting the idea of an audience-chamber. It's a spirit Lincoln addressing a spirit audience. So you see (he smiled) I have seen Lincoln—the ideal statesman, of the people, for the peo-

ple, God's ambassador, who cannot die—Saint Gaudens' masterpiece, and this book has brought it all back to me, and the war and my wound are forgotten, and art outlasts all violence, and my joy is returning to me."

Here I intervened: "And I have seen the ideal type of soldier, *St. George*, by Donatello, a cast, but more impressive, more beautiful than the original in Florence, because Time and Wind and Weather, those master-craftsmen, have worked upon it, and given it an air of spiritual reality, softening and revealing, hiding and suggesting, denied to the human hand."

"Where?"

"In 'The Hall by the Sea,' in the garden between the dancing hall and the menagerie. Come!"

We crossed the road and entered "The Hall by the Sea," surely the last place in the world where one would expect an æsthetic experience, moving and memorable. We passed through the mirrored dancing hall and into the garden. There, facing us, against a background of arching trees (against young trees Lincoln's statue also stands), was Donatello's *St. George*, wan and worn by weather, yet doubly beautiful, the ideal type of soldier, the least looked-at thing

in Margate, and the most beautiful and wonderful.

The sculptor gave a little gasp of happiness. I left him there, and wandered round the garden to look at the other classical statues that some unknown benefactor has deposited there. Over them all has passed the hand of those master-craftsmen—Time and Wind and Weather—but they could not move me like the *St. George*, because the *St. George* was made by Donatello.

When I returned to my friend he did not hear me approach. He was seated on a bench in front of the *St. George* seeing a vision of the unalterable, ever-new message of art. He was out of the body. He was anchored to eternal things. All this sorry world had slipped him by, and he was a citizen of that ancient and present City of God, peopled by spiritual activities, which enter us when we dwell upon such eternal ideas as *St. George* and *Abraham Lincoln* made manifest to you and me by Donatello and Saint Gaudens.

Joy had circled back to my friend. And it all happened, not in Florence and the Victoria and Albert Museum; it happened at Margate and Chicago.

[*"Art remains," said the Invisible Guide. "Art is eternal if the artist is content with the joy of the working."*]

VIII

THE AUSTRALIAN COMES HOME

IN August I went north. Once I took that journey with Jimmy. He read "The Lure of the Honey Bee" all the way, quite neglecting the scenery. I expostulated; he answered: "My mind can only assimilate one fine thing at a time."

* * * * * *

When the long Scots express drew up at Rugby station, the five Australian soldiers tumbled out upon the platform. They had discarded their tunics; they were hot and very happy; they eyed the tea-wagon longingly. One of them cried: "There's no time, boys." Another remarked: "What a splendid station! I could mop up a bucket of that tea." Here I intervened, addressing him whose hair was cropped closest, a giant, tingling with virility. "You can take the cups with you into the carriage, and drink at your leisure." His forehead puckered, revolving the proposal. He made a half-step to the tea-wagon,

paused, smiled. "Thanks! No! I'm used to doing without things." The whistle sounded. We scrambled back into our compartments.

The sun blazed. The afternoon grew hotter. At Crewe the Australians succumbed to the tea-wagon. I watched the close-cropped soldier drink three cups of tea and eat four buns. Later, much later, in the open country just over the Border, the train slowed and gradually became stationary. We waited in sunlight and composure. After the lapse of five minutes I looked from the window, observed a group around the engine and the guard running back along the line in the direction we had come. At the same time I noticed the five Australians dropping from their carriage, and heard them shout (such lungs), asking if they could be of help. No! The coupling of the front carriage had broken. It would mean an hour's delay—that was all.

I descended from my carriage and joined the soldiers. They were picking bluebells, the veritable bluebells of Scotland, and the close-cropped giant was scaling a little hill crowned with purple heather. He returned with an armful, and throwing himself panting upon the bank, cried gleefully, "My word! This is the trip of

our life. The bonny purple heather, the bonny purple heather. We've heard Harry Lauder sing it on the gramophone, haven't we, boys?"

"Ay," they cried, and the level sun glowed on their happy faces and on auld Scotland.

The engine, now uncoupled, was shunting the front carriage half a mile ahead, so we talked at ease. "It's fine that none of you have lost your Scot's accent," I said. "What," they shouted in unison, "we got a Scot's accent! Hurrah for the old countrie." They sprang to their feet and danced among the bluebells, while the sun dipped, and the after-glow transfigured Australia and Scotland.

"Where are you bound for?" I asked.

"We're going Home," said the close-cropped giant.

And the end of evening was vocal with the chorus of the song they sang, which is called "Australia Will be There." Laughing heads emerged from the carriages, handkerchiefs were waved. There were cheers, the engine whistled, and the guard, hurrying up, cried, "Now, you boys, time's up—bundle in."

I invited them into my carriage, and explained that I had nothing to offer but cool barley-water

in a Thermos flask, and some fairly good cigars. They were all born in Australia; at the call to arms they had been in humble positions in civil life; not one of them had ever crossed the sea before. Their acquaintance with England was limited to Salisbury Plain and a quarter of an hour of London that morning. Now they were on ten days' leave and—going home.

No child that I have ever known has asked so many questions as they about the country we passed through. "Mon, but it's bonny," one whispered aloud; and as the train rushed on I state that their Scot's accent grew stronger and broader.

The close-cropped giant sat next to me, and when the blinds were drawn, under the Defence of the Realm Act, he became communicative and friendly, as strangers will with strangers under such conditions. He withdrew from his tunic a thick pocketbook, showed me photographs of his home-people, bits of bunting that had flown in Australia, a dried flower or two, and pages of names and addresses in a clerkly, trembling handwriting.

"Dad wrote them out," he said. "They're relations and old friends of the family. I shan't have time to see them all. But there's one thing

I must do, I want awfully to do. I promised Dad."

The train was approaching Edinburgh. These Australian soldiers, who were going to homes they had never seen, far scattered, were making themselves spruce, and bidding each other melodramatic temporary good-byes. I had a private word with the close-cropped soldier. He interested me; there was something permanent behind his great gladness. "Shall we meet again?" I asked. "I'm going through to Stirling to-morrow." His face lighted. "Why, that's my home, at least about three miles from Stirling. I've never been there, but I could find my way blindfold past Argyll's Lodging and Mar's Work up to the Castle ramparts, and don't I just know where to look for the Ladies' Rock, and Bannockburn, and the old Bridge, and Cambuskenneth, and the Bruce and Wallace monuments, and Ben Ledi and the steep sides of Ben Lomond. Oh, this is going to be the time of my life. But there's something I must do first, much more important than anything else." He became grave.

"When shall you be in Stirling?" I asked.

He grasped my hand. "I shall be up at the

Castle at five minutes to seven in the morning—that's the old hour, the day after to-morrow."

The train steamed into Edinburgh. There were greetings and shouts. The Scots had come home.

> "From the low shieling of the distant island
> Mountains divide us, and the waste of seas,
> But still our hearts are young, our hearts are Highland,
> And we in dreams behold the Hebrides."

There may be finer sights in the world than the view from the ramparts of Stirling Castle—"the key of the Highlands." But that's the sight for me. Here, in life-giving air, history, romance, and the wonder of Nature are fused. Here is infinity. And there was my friend, the close-cropped Australian soldier, swinging towards me through the Douglas Garden.

His eyes swept round the tremendous landscape, his throat contracted; the muscles worked vigorously. His arm shot out, the brown index finger rigid—"There's hame!" he murmured.

He turned away and ascended the steps of the Douglas Room. Reverently he knelt down before the communion-table used in the Castle by John Knox.

I walked to the open doorway.

When he rejoined me he said, "You understand? I promised Dad."

I understood.

[*"There was something permanent behind his great gladness," murmured The Invisible Guide.*]

IX

THE NIPPER

IT was a grief to Jimmy's father that neither of his sons had entered the Air Service. How proud he would have been to call "The Nipper" his boy. But he had compensations. Time showed that.

*   *   *   *   *   *

One morning, two years ago, into the still air cut the buzz of an aeroplane. Suddenly the rhythmic buzz changed into a horrible grating whirr. All know what that means. I rushed out—to see the aeroplane descending awkwardly between the trees.

It had alighted in an adjoining meadow, and after an inglorious charge through a low hedge had paused in the corner of a turnip field, with no more damage than a punctured tyre and the breaking of wire stays. The pilot, who was unhurt, having sent to —— for a gang of "riggers," was now seated under a tree, waiting cheerfully. "Engine trouble," he said laconically, "and I got lost in the clouds. Looks like rain."

The repairs were not finished until the next afternoon. The village, rather awe-struck, silently watched the mechanics. But the Nipper asked questions. That was my first introduction to him. He said he had turned eighteen; he looked fifteen. Short and slight, with a frank, brown face and watchful eyes, he had a square, scientific brow (the Huxley type) and a resolute chin. But he was as active and merry as a colt in a meadow, except when he was examining the aeroplane, and then, anyone could see, he was using every particle of brain and intelligence. He asked questions innumerable. When at last the airman flew away I suspect he was glad to go on account of the pertinacity of the Nipper. I walked back with him to his father's house, a doctor—an old Territorial, now a major in the R.A.M.C., and under orders to take his men into training in a certain East Coast town.

"I'm for the Yeomanry," said the Nipper. "Dad was always fond of horses." "And you?" I asked. The Nipper looked at the sky. "Oh, if I had my way, of course I'd join the Flying Corps."

Months passed. I had gone to the East Coast town to visit the major, now a colonel, also on the

chance of seeing the Nipper again, who, I had learned, was in the neighbourhood. "How is he doing?" I asked the colonel. "Trekking about in this neighbourhood; should arrive here early to-morrow morning. They've taken away their horses, and given 'em bicycles. The boy is annoyed, but I tell him discipline is discipline, and he must stick it even if they given 'em broomsticks." "But I suppose you'd let him exchange, say, into the Flying Corps—if he—if he expressed the desire?" The colonel shrugged his shoulders. "A boy's will is the wind's will, and the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts. Fancy me quoting Longfellow! He's a good lad and as brave as a lion. But he must ask his mother about the Flying Corps."

My bedroom faced a large detached villa, which had been converted into headquarters. "If the —— Yeomanry, who ride cycles instead of steeds, enter this town to-morrow morning," I said to myself, as I retired, "they will probably line up in front of H.Q." That is just what happened. At an uncomfortably early hour a bugle-call lured me to the window, and I saw about a hundred cyclists, a gun attached to each frame, and standing at the head of the iron steeds, men in shirt-sleeves and shorts. Half-

way down the line I found the Nipper. He looked fit, but unhappy. "We've been roaming the country for a month," he said. "It's all right, but I'm fed up with this," and his toe touched his muddy bike. As he spoke there was a rhythmic whirr in the air, and overhead passed, flying low, a seaplane, and on the lower plane, dazzling white, the blue circle with the red blob in the centre, of the Allies, flashed like an oriflamme. The Nipper gazed at it entranced. When it had reached the further cliff the great bird, flying so steadily and strong, turned and swept past us again towards the north. "What a sight!" exclaimed the Nipper.

The Yeomanry officer gave a word of command, the men mounted. "Billets," cried the Nipper—"and breakfast." They rode off, but I noticed that the Nipper almost collided with his neighbour through half-turning in his saddle to watch the flight of the seaplane.

Weeks passed. The next time I heard about the Nipper was from his mother. I called upon her—well, because the Colonel had gone to Salonica, and she was lonely and anxious. She was also a little troubled about the Nipper. He had informed her in a brusque, badly-spelt letter

(ending, "don't worry, darling Mumsy; I'm all right, and as fit as a fiddle") that he had left the Yeomanry, and was now an A.M. ("that means 'Air Mecchanic,' you know, old dear"); and that he was working hard as a rigger ("I wanted to studdy the whole game from the beginning, you see, and I'm also taking flying lessons, which is a heavy extra; so if you could send me a few pounds. It all goes to help, you know. I consoled her as well as I could, urging that Salonica was quite a safe place, and that every lad of spirit wanted to be an airman. To which she answered—" *'Per ardua ad astra'* . . . but it's the terror that breaks a mother's heart, and triumph only means a fresh oncoming terror, until—until the war ends."

Once again I saw the Nipper; but he did not see me. There is a certain secluded place on the coast where the seaplanes nest. The hangar is concealed from the eyes of the curious by a high palisade; but by descending to the end of the breakwater one gets a view of the inclined plane down which the seaplane glides. Fifteen men, sometimes more, clad in ochre overalls, conduct the seaplane to the water, and haul her up when she returns. In one of these A.M.'s, or

whatever they are called, I recognised the Nipper. "Good lad," I muttered. "He's seeing the whole game through."

Months passed. Once more I saw the Nipper. I was in a train at Woking Station. Just as we moved forward the train from Southampton drew in. I caught sight of the Nipper, and called him. "Just back from France," he cried. "We're carrying on fine." He wore a Flight Commander's badge.

He was just twenty when the Zeppelin affair happened. Imagine it. At twenty to be world famous, and to have achieved a deed which will resound in English history as long as history is written; and, best of all, to have shown others that such a deed can be done. And at twenty! Truly this is the age of youth when a young life can come thus gloriously to full circle. And on the very day that the Nipper's achievement filled the papers I read a statement in small print that the Colonel was among the missing.

Again I called upon the Nipper's mother. She was sitting alone upon the terrace. After we had talked, and she was quieter, I said: "Missing does not necessarily mean the worst. And think of the boy! How proud you must

be!" "It's very wonderful," she said; "but I can only think of him as a little lad in a sailor suit, whose hair would never allow itself to be parted. Triumph—and now the on-coming torture." There was a long, long pause; then she smiled, and said slowly, and quite simply, "It is not correct to say that God will wipe away all tears. He wipes them away this minute, if we will but let Him."

That night I read again of the Nipper's triumph. The writers exhausted adjectives, and I could find no adequate words to express my pride. Then I remembered what a great French General said when witnessing a charge of British troops. He said all—in fewest words. He said to his English comrade: "Splendide! magnifique!—what you call not 'alf."

[*I waited, my mind full of the prowess of the boy, waited for the Invisible Guide; but he seemed distant. Then he spoke faintly—"It's the mothers that suffer."*]

X

THE LITTLE SENTINEL

AND all the while I was thinking of that night when I played sentinel on Roof Hill. How the mind roams from mystery to actuality.

*   *   *   *   *   *

He stood at the pier-head, in a thin drizzle of rain, his bright eyes staring out at the grey ocean. There was nothing to see but a leaden sky meeting the misty horizon, choppy waves, and the gathering shades of evening; but he watched and peered vigilantly, this sentinel-soldier, and he was—ready for anything, trained to instant action. Rain-drops glistened on his fixed bayonet, his red left-hand shook with the cold, his khaki was of poor quality, his age was hardly twenty, his past had been something quite humble in shop or workhouse; but now all was changed. His country called, and he had arisen transformed to the heroic caste. He was initiated, responsible. This little sentinel represented the Imperial might of the island race. There he

stood at the pier-head, blue with cold, guarding England.

But the little sentinel was not yet quite a cast-iron soldier. As I sat in a damp deck-chair watching him he conveyed to his mouth something that looked very like a brandy-ball, and when two homely young women passed him, smiling furtively but affably, he said aloud, as if addressing himself, "Funny what a lot of pretty girls pass here." Then he straightened his shoulders, and for a minute looked fierce. And the grey sea grew greyer, and the horizon mistier, and the few passers-by were too chilled to lean over the rail and watch the patient fishermen on the landing-stage beneath. Once a boat loomed by, a harmless craft: the hand of the little sentinel went quickly to his pocket and drew forth a telescope, an unnautical affair, the kind of present a fond mother would give her boy. He clapped it to his eye, surveyed the boat, and with a sigh replaced the instrument. "All well," I said. "Seems so," he answered. "Chilly here!" "You're right, mate." The conversation languished. I am well aware that one should not speak to a sentry, but as he addressed his remarks to the open sea, and I mine to my boots, we could hardly be charged with con-

versing. By this time the pedestrians had ceased to shuffle by, and the loneliness had become very lonely. "It's quiet here," I said. "I could do with a bit of excitement," said the little sentinel. "As to excitement," said I, "I've just had my fill, and it's left me boiling with anger." "You're in luck to be boiling," said the little sentinel, smiling as he flicked the raindrops from his bayonet. He withdrew his eyes for an instant from the sea, and looked at me interrogatively.

"It was at luncheon to-day, good English fare," I began, as if soliloquising, and the little sentinel, gazing out to sea, appeared not to be listening. "I was beginning to be content and complacent when, suddenly, from the next table, I heard the hateful tongue. I turned, and there, within a yard, were three Germans. One was a youth, one an elderly, florid man, and the third a fat, vital person in early manhood, who was eating in the gobbling, spluttering way that has always made a meal with a German so unpleasant a spectacle. I raged inwardly; his eyes met mine; he dropped his German, and changed into what he would call English. He talked freely of the war, of our mercantile marine, of our prospects in the Balkans, and in moments of

excitement he fell again into his native tongue, as did the elder man; but the youth remained silent. I think he was frightened. I listened, having no stomach to continue my meal. I cannot swear that they said anything derogatory to England. Frankly I hoped they would, for then—— But it seemed incredible that in an English restaurant, filled with English folk, some in khaki, three of the enemy should be sitting guzzling and talking their hateful language. A gentleman would, at least, have spoken the tongue of the country in which he was a guest. Wine and food made the bounder more aggressive. He fell more frequently into German, and his criticisms became more pointed. I rose. I could endure his proximity no longer. I had a savage hope that he would say something definite. I——"

The little sentinel smiled.

"I left the table and waylaid the head waiter. 'Do you know,' I said, 'that there are three Germans at that table? It's intolerable. It's an insult.' 'Very sorry, sir. I didn't notice it. We're so busy on a Sunday. Perhaps you would like to see the manager.'

"The pleasant manager was having a pleasant meal in his pleasant little den. I explained, and

complained, 'Are you sure it was German they were talking?' 'Of course I am. There they are at it still; there, at that table. Look, the waiter is just serving them with three Welsh rabbits. It's shameful that they should be allowed to sit down with us and discuss us loudly in German. The worst of the lot is the fat, vital one eating his Welsh rabbit with his knife.'

"The manager was apologetic; but he suggested that they might be Swiss, or German-Americans. He would make inquiries; he was very sorry; but he seemed more sorry that my luncheon should have been spoiled than that Germans should pollute his establishment with their presence. 'Oh! hang my luncheon,' said I; 'it's the indignity of sitting in the same room with them, and being bombarded with their unforgiveable language.' Angrily I left the place, half-inclined to lodge a complaint with the police. But I didn't. I came here to cool off. It was the thing who talked about the English mercantile marine, stuffed his Welsh rabbit into his mouth with his knife, and spluttered loudly in German, that incensed me. However, on reflection——"

"Why didn't you biff him one?" said the

little sentinel, in a clear voice, looking straight out to sea.

* * * * * *

The advice of the little sentinel seemed so admirable that I thought of nothing else all the way home. We, civilians, complain, argue, and rage, when the right way, whether the antagonist be an enemy or an abuse, is to "biff him one." That I am sure the little sentinel will do, quickly, effectively, when the occasion comes. He has been trained to act, I to reflect. Pooh! Reflection is antiquated nowadays—useless. I sit in the warm railway carriage, with a cup of tea and a piece of buttered toast before me—reflecting, guarding my health. The little sentinel stands at the pier-head wet and cold, his rifle in his numbed hand—acting, guarding England. Reflection and Action! Would that I were he!

[*Again I waited for the comment of the Invisible Guide—waited in vain. Perhaps it was because I was still angry at the recollection of those Germans.*]

XI

THE NEUTRAL

JIMMY understood the significance of the terrible word "Neutral," which means that you must be colourless before evil as before good. "It's impossible," he once cried with passion. Alas, he did not live to see great America find it impossible. The Neutral discussed below is a Neutral of the days before America came in.

* * * * * *

He has been travelling through enemy lands; he is now studying us.

The wanderings of this mystified Neutral had brought him to the garden of a remote English village inn on a lovely Sunday evening. We sat on a bench, surrounded by flowers, shrubs, and the village gadabouts, I endeavoring to answer his questions.

The Neutral is learned in music. He has a sensitive ear. Suddenly he writhed, "What can it be?" he cried. "What terrible sounds. What are they?"

I could not answer. I could only suppose that some wandering operatic tenor had taken on the burr of the world, and was now charming yokels for coppers. Yet it was a good voice, a flexible tenor; but, oh the foolishness of his declamatory method.

"It's iniquitous," said the Neutral. "I must see him." We walked towards the bar-parlour entrance, which was wreathed in crimson ramblers. Within, standing before the open fireplace, was a sailor of vast proportions, with a large, hot, rubicund face. He was singing "The Bridge," by Longfellow, slowly, with extraordinary emphasis, helped by a semaphore action of his arms, and enunciating each line, melodramatically and gravely, in a lingering falsetto. The perspiration rolled from his round, bronzed face. A mug of old ale, half-finished, stood by his side: he was the picture of health and happiness, his arms were like the trunks of a tree; but the pathos and resignation he infused into the statement that—

How often, oh, how often,
  I had wished that the ebbing tide
Would bear me away on its bosom
  O'er the ocean wild and wide

was so poignant that a dark little man in the blue blouse of a "pit-prop" woodcutter began to cry. This Woodcutter was the Sailor's attentive listener: he stared open-mouthed, admiringly through the entire fifteen verses of "The Bridge," at the big sentimentalist. When at the conclusion, the Sailor, with unparalleled feeling and pantomime, invoked the moon, etc., "as the symbol of love in heaven, and its wavering image here," the dark and passionate Woodcutter cheered, and, placing his arm round the Sailor's waist (he was only half his height), he conducted him to the garden, talking volubly.

They seated themselves on a bench. The Sailor mopped his brow, the Woodcutter talked. "Saxon and Celt," I whispered.

"But I thought your country was at war," said the Neutral. "Why isn't that big songster with his ship?"

The Woodcutter overheard the remark. He jumped towards us like a squirrel. "Him," he shouted, "him's a hero. He was in the big naval fight, and he's going to be mentioned in dispatches." Then he enumerated his friend's deeds of heroism in the Jutland battle, while the Sailor sat placidly mopping his brow, his full-moon face one vast smile.

The Neutral apologised. "You are, of course, too old to fight," he remarked to the Woodcutter. "Me, I'm fifty-seven. I'm a National Guard." He explained his duties fully, with animation. "I've got two sons in the Army. I was in the Boer War." He waved a crooked finger in the face of the Neutral. "We beat the Boers," he said, "and we can beat they."

A woman approached with a perambulator containing two infants. The Sailor withdrew the children and dangled them on his huge knee. The Woodcutter proceeded to talk ecstatically to a stranger.

"And both are Britons?" asked the Neutral. "Yes, Saxon and Celt." "You are a strange race."

We sat watching the ebb and flow of village life in a holiday interval of war-time. Two men in khaki, travel-stained, laden with impedimenta, entered the garden, smiling, so glad to be near home again. It was plain where they had come from. As they approached the bar, through which the cheerful face of the proprietress was visible, they saluted. " 'Shun!" shouted one, as they brought their heels together. "A piece of sticking-plaster, if you please, my dear," cried the other.

"Have you come from the Front?" asked the beaming proprietress.

"Oh, no, miss. They don't send the nicest soldiers to the Front now. Never. It ain't good for them."

The Neutral looked perplexed. "Is that supposed to be funny?" he asked. "Oh, it's just our way," I answered. "You're a freak race," said the Neutral. "You spend all your spare time trying to make the world believe that you are not serious. Who is that man reading over there by the swing?" "Royal Flying Corps," I answered. "He looks serious," said the Neutral. "See, he's quite absorbed. I'd give something to know what he's reading?" I strolled towards the Flying Man, and glanced over his shoulder. It was "Three Men in a Boat."

The Neutral was silent as we walked up the lane towards my house. "I'll read you something this evening," I said, "which may help to clear your mind. It's a poem." "Well, I'm glad," said the Neutral, "that there's someone in England cares for poetry."

The poem I read to him was "The Puzzler," by Rudyard Kipling, very significant, and not very well known.

The Celt in all his variants from Builth to Ballyhoo,
His mental processes are plain—one knows what he will do,
And can logically predicate his finish by his start;
But the English—ah, the English—they are quite a race apart.

Their psychology is bovine, their outlook crude and raw,
They abandon vital matters to be tickled with a straw,
But the straw that they were tickled with—the chaff that they were fed with—
They convert into a weaver's beam to break their foeman's head with.

For undemocratic reasons and for motives not of State,
They arrive at their conclusions—largely inarticulate.
Being void of self-expression they confide their views to none;
But sometimes in a smoking-room, one learns why things were done.

Yes, sometimes in a smoking-room, through clouds of "ers" and "ums,"
Obliquely and by inference illumination comes,
On some step that they have taken, or some action they approve—
Embellished with the argot of the Upper Fourth Remove.

In telegraphic sentences, half nodded to their friends,
They hint a matter's inwardness—and there the matter ends.

And while the Celt is talking from Valencia to Kirkwall,
The English—ah, the English!—don't say anything at all!

The Neutral smoked in silence. "The English are a queer mixture," he said at length.

"They range from Turner to Landseer," I said, "from Keats to Kipling, from William Blake to Francis Drake."

"That's a stiff brew," said the Neutral.

"Yes, add a pinch of Tom Hood and King Arthur, with a dash of Kitchener and a flavour of Bill Silkes. Then there are the boys of twenty! You know what they are. . . ."

"I do," said the Neutral. "God bless them. They give a head to the brew which makes it fit for the gods. The Briton's all right, even when he laughs."

"He laughs," I said, "because he knows in his heart, absolutely and finally, that he can't be beaten."

* * * * * *

The Neutral gazed fixedly at an evening primrose offering its pale beauty to the quiet close of day; but his thoughts were elsewhere.

"Why can't the Briton be beaten?" he asked.

"Because he can't."

"The Germans had better give in," said the Neutral.

"Sure," said I.

[*The poem would have pleased Jimmy Carstairs during his earth-life. Even now I felt his smile, but it was a thin, momentary smile.*]

XII

JOY

OFTEN I wonder what would have been the effect upon Jimmy's life and art if he had recovered—even if maimed. Would Joy have still accompanied him? I think so.

*   *   *   *   *   *

One morning a notice was posted in the hotel, stating that wounded soldiers were to be entertained in the dining-room at half-past six, and asking if the guests would mind postponing their own dinners for an hour.

We did not mind.

They arrived in motor-brakes, and soon the entrance-hall was filled with the cheery men clad in those ill-fitting, blue clothes, with the red ties and the trousers, turned up, showing the white linings—a uniform that must never be changed. It is enshrined in our hearts.

I sat in a corner watching this gathering of a new class of jolly Englishmen with a past, as they overflowed into the long corridor, hung with pictures of a kind, through which they must

pass to the dining-room. The chief picture was a fresco by a local artist called *The Triumph of Right,* showing in the centre a bevy of winged anæmic females rising uneasily from the earth, and on either side groups of robuster females clinging to bearded men, chained and all woebegone. Some of the wounded soldiers, who were lingering in the corridor, gazed blankly at this incredibly stupid fresco. One laughed and said, "I'd take one of the wrong 'uns for choice," and his companion remarked, "Art ain't for us, Alf." Then the gong sounded, and they flocked through the corridor into the dining-room, just big schoolboys, these gay, unconscious heroes, for whom art has as yet no message. That is not their fault.

During the meal, the gramophone, by special request, wheezed out "Keep the Home Fires Burning," and "Charlie Chaplin," and while they roared approval, I sat alone in the dim light, so near to life, yet so far from it, and wondered if there was not something in art for them, something that touched life, their life, something far removed from that silly fresco of *The Triumph of Right;* something plain, but real and splendid, having a message of hope and joy: something in art like Anatole France's definition

of a simple style in literature. "A simple style," he said, "is like a white light. It is complex, but not to outward seeming."

Complex, but not to outward seeming! Would they, I wonder, care for an unpainted picture I had dreamed, and saw vividly in that dream? The title came first, *The Offering*. It was after a victory: the scene was a little chapel, just behind the firing-line, battered and broken by shells, seared by fire. Into it had come at dawn a group of men fresh from the trenches and victory, tattered and wounded, but triumphant, led by their captain. They stand near the doorway, with bowed heads, uncertain, but willing to follow him. He kneels before what is left of the altar, and lays in front of it his sword. The men salute as their captain makes the offering of the Symbol of Victory to Undying Love. The silence is like a white light.

While I mused, dreaming this dream again, those boys in the dining-room were singing, "But me and my true love will never meet again, on the bonnie, bonnie banks of Loch Lomond." But they sang it with such gusto, joy in life and in the present moment, that the pathetic words became a song of triumph, and the "never meet again" a reunion of all lovers. Grief fled before

their shining gladness. They sang, and to my tired heart came the thought—"What if the Gospel of Joy with which the wise are already trying to rejuvenate the world (Christ glorified, not crucified), what if this Gospel of Joy should receive its great impetus from our wounded soldiers? How strange if that should be the happy message of the maimed to grey England.

And while they thumped the tables and proceeded to sing other sad songs as if they were pantomime choruses, my memory recurred to another fresco that had momentarily caught the attention, in my presence, of another group of wounded soldiers. That was the *Orphans* fresco, by Cayley Robinson, placed at the close of last year in the Middlesex Hospital, one of a series of decorations illustrating *Acts of Mercy*. I had seen it when it was shown at the New English Art Club, and I had said to myself—So Cayley Robinson comes into his kingdom. This grave, tender vision of an evening meal at some conventual orphanage—the slim, passionless sisters, the pale children in their blue frocks and white caps and aprons, the bare wall alive with subtle shadows, the mystical mingling of daylight and lamplight, the cloistral air of it

all, the cloistral mind of the artist so faithfully expressed—yes, with this he comes into his kingdom; it is the final expression of all he has dreamed and felt in his life and in his art. And I said further to myself—This is very beautiful; it is the only new wall painting I have seen for years that gives me complete satisfaction.

Later, a little while ago, when it was placed in the new entrance hall of the Middlesex Hospital, I saw it again. And as I sat there, so content with its peace and simplicity, glad to sit for half an hour looking at it, husbanding the spiritual thoughts that it evoked, I noticed (it was visiting day) that of the relatives and friends of the patients—such a huddle of tired, dulled, anxious folk—not one of them looked at the fresco. They sat stolid, or wandered aimlessly about, but none of them gazed at or spoke of the *Orphans* fresco. Suddenly I understood. This is a picture in sad colours of a sad scene. It is too near their lives to interest or lift them. What they want in a wall painting is change. They want Joy. And I said to myself—This picture is for you, and such as you, who get a quiet kind of joy out of sadness, who can rejoice in a Botticelli and be happy in the vision of a Mantegna. But art is not for the weary. They

need joy. Where is the artist who will express joy, even in fresco painting?

It was a "Private Soldier at the Front" who wrote:

I am not sad; only I long for lustre;
I am tired of greys and browns and the leafless ash.
I would have hours that move like a glitter of dancers,
Far from the angry guns that boom and flash.

Who will give him when he comes home the "blithe wind" laughing on the hills in a world "gay with blossom and fleetness"? For our wounded soldiers have brought back to us the Gospel of Joy, and the artist must once more go through the old purgation of learning anew from life, not from his sad inward dreams, but from the laughter in life, joy triumphant, of our wounded soldiers. Was it prophetical that years ago I should have written—"Joy may winnow where grief fails"?

[*The voice repeated—"The men salute as their captain makes the offering of the symbol of Victory to Undying Love." Jimmy was near me again.*]

XIII

HORRIBLE!

JIMMY'S art was love. But art can also purge by means of pity and terror. It can be a warning: it can be horrible.

* * * * * *

In a copy of the "Egoist" I find this by Mr. Havilland: "We are living in the age of the machine. Man made the machine in his own image. . . . After making the machine in his own image he has made his human ideal machinomorphic. . . . The machine has retaliated by re-making man in its own image."

Horrible!

But art, like literature, has warned, is warning us.

I stood for a long time gazing—entranced, disturbed, ruminative—at a picture by C. R. W. Nevinson called "Mitrailleuse: an Illustration." Rightly is it called an illustration. It is an illustration of a terrible implement of warfare—the French machine-gun, and the picture is as ruthless and implacable as the weapon. You

peer into a pit in the zone of fire; barbed wire stretches across the surface of this machinomorphic pit; above is the grey, clear sky of France. In the pit are four French soldiers. One lies dead. The three living men are conscious of one thing only—the control of their death-scattering mitrailleuse. There it lurks, rigid and venomous, ready to spit out immense destruction. And the gunners? Are they men? No! They have become machines. They are as rigid and implacable as their terrible gun. The machine has retaliated by making man in its own image. The ashen, angular faces of the French soldiers, the hard grey of their helmets, their steely grey uniforms, are brothers in colour to the grey of the gun and the grey of the cartridges that are coiling themselves venomously into it. The mitrailleuse is rigid: the men are rigid. As I see them in this most significant "illustration" they have ceased to be men. They are machines, without fears, without hopes, wound up, ready to strike, prepared to the ultimate point of efficiency. The crew and the gun are one, equipped for one end, one only—destruction. Horrible!

But let me be quite explicit. I glory in these French gunners. I glory in their gun. I salute

these self-sacrificing automata in the clothes of men, for they are giving their all—life, love, ideals—for their country, as our men are. And had I my will I would send a million mitrailleuses and four million gunners against the enemies of mankind who are delaying the progress of the race. It is the fate of our soldiers to fight, to live, to die for justice, humanity, freedom, and we who watch and wait envy them. But that does not change the naked fact that civilisation has temporarily failed, and that man, who should be walking with God, has become one with the evil machine invented by man, here pictured, and more affrighting, because so reticent, than a picture of actual slaughter.

Horrible!

They tell me that this work called "Mitrailleuse" is not art, that it is what the artist calls it—an illustration. I don't care. Call it what you like! It is more significant than a thousand "accomplished" works of art.

Art is a bigger thing than mere technique. Why do I think so highly of "Mitrailleuse"? Because the technique is but a means to an end. Because it is a frank statement or criticism of life, of our present horrible, not-to-be-evaded way of living. Therefore it is a warning. The

artist went out to France. There he saw realities. He felt. Art is feeling plus the subordinate technique. He saw this mitrailleuse pit; he felt profoundly what he saw; he painted it, and because his feeling was charged with passion, his fancy for cubism became the handmaid, not the mistress, and so he produced this cubist reality, this concrete example of the machinomorphic madness of the world, a picture that should be in the national collection, because it is a stark criticism of the times—a warning for the unborn.

It is horrible; but it is truth. If Wisdom contemplating mankind is filled with pity and disdain, who can fathom the depth of the disdain of Wisdom contemplating this example of man's upward progress?

I remember another art warning.

I went to see an exhibition of advanced pictures. Lingering in the outer gallery, I looked through the vista of rooms and saw an erection, a scaffold-like thing, stretching upwards to the skylight. "That's odd," I said to myself, "to select a Press day to clean the top windows." I continued examining pictures, but I could not dismiss the thing from my mind. Its menace was beginning to clutch at me.

When I reached the end room I discovered that the obstruction was not a skylight-cleaning apparatus. It was apparently something procured from an engineering establishment. The lower part, reaching from the floor to above my head, was made of iron. It was a strange-looking, consummately efficient machine. I glanced at my catalogue. This colossal item in an art exhibition was called "The Rock Drill," by Jacob Epstein.

I sat down. I examined "The Rock Drill," that was neither sculpture nor a machine, yet something of each, and something more. Hunched on the rock drill, towering above it, yet part of the machine, and subservient to it, was —well, it was once a man, but it had now become a wiry, human frame, with bulging forehead, all spirituality gone, all the material, scientific part of this atrocious human increased to the n-th power. The machine held him as the Old Man of the Sea held Sinbad. The machine had conquered. It had re-made man in its own image.

Horrible!

[*No murmur came from the voice. I bowed my head, because I knew that my Invisible Guide, who is Love, cannot be where Horror is.*]

PART II

HIS GUIDANCE FADES

I

JIMMY'S BROTHER IS WOUNDED

LOOKING back I cannot decide exactly when the guidance of Jimmy Carstairs began to fade. It was gradual. For many weeks after his death the consciousness of his presence was strong. He was continually with me. I did nothing without, as it were, consulting him; but as my health improved, and as I became more interested in affairs—my Home Diary of the War, the transforming of our garden into an Experimental Plot, and the preparation for publication of a number of essays I had written—the spiritual image of Jimmy Carstairs grew fainter. My life was becoming normal again, and everyone knows that the perfectly healthy, either materially or spiritually, are incurious. No doubt Jimmy was right in saying that experiences founded upon emotion, although seemingly profound at the time, fade. And I had not yet learnt what he meant by Understanding.

Then something sad and sudden happened that blurred the image of my friend.

We received the news that Jimmy's Brother was severely wounded. A shell had demolished the rail-head temporary hospital where he was either operating or assisting a senior, I could not gather which: two men were saved. One was unhurt, and he extricated Jimmy's brother whose right leg was shattered. It was amputated at Boulogne, and the next news I heard, many weeks later, was that he was in Guy's Hospital.

I hurried to London, and found him in one of the corridor cubicles. He looked a wraith, and his eyes were as big as watches; but he assured me that he was "as fit as a fiddle," and could leave in a week.

That strange man, his father, sat silent by the bed. I have not told you about Papa Carstairs, who idolised Jimmy, and who is supposed to be a genius. He writes lower-depth plays and long novels, and he has spent a small fortune (including some of Jimmy's) on a lustre-tile process. But the true bent of his genius is mechanical. He patented a compass alignment which has been successful; also an electric torch that lasts longer than a week; but his whole interest now is in aeroplanes, and somewhere between Mill Hill and Barnet he is supposed to be performing wonders in aeroplane construction.

But his health is against him. For some reason or other he has lost control of his legs. He thinks that the trouble began with a six-feet fall that he had from an aeroplane. His legs are useless; he had to be carried in an invalid chair from the cab. He says nothing. He gazes at his son—silently.

What shall I do? How shall I serve this ill boy? Decision is not difficult. Jimmy's brother shall come to my house for his period of convalescence. There he will receive attention and suitable nursing, which he certainly will not find amidst the discomfort of the aeroplane works. Papa Carstairs agrees—silently.

A week later I motored Jimmy's brother to my house in Surrey.

He has now an excellent artificial leg, but he complains that it irks him to wear it; he prefers to hobble about on crutches. He talks about climbing Roof Hill.

Most of the day he spends lying on the window couch while I work at the table, preparing my book of essays for the press. One day I said to him—"Before you came I had a strange feeling that Jimmy was near me, and when I had finished an article, I would write down his comments upon it. His words came to me natur-

ally, without effort. I seemed to be living in his presence, but since you came his influence has gone. He has faded from my life."

"Rot," said Jimmy's brother. "You're overwrought! What you want is young, cheerful society, like mine. I'm a bit of a crock, I know, but barring the absence of a leg, I'm game to be your—your Boswell—no, that isn't it. You show me your articles, or read them to me, and I'll tell you what *I* think of the blessed things."

"Well," I said, humouring him, "here's one that presages the war, although it was written before August, 1914."

"Carry on," said Jimmy's brother.

II

"SOMETHING BROODING"

I WAITED for the boat at Parkeston Quay, near Harwich.

The delay was intentional. I arrived at the rambling hotel, squeezed between the railway station and the quay, twenty-three hours in advance. The reason? Not world-moving; but it sufficed. In the Tate Gallery is one of the most beautiful and companionable little pictures that Constable ever painted, called *Harwich: Sea and Lighthouse*. Indeed, were I given my choice of all Constable's works, I should find it difficult to choose between *Harwich Sea*, and *Weymouth Bay* from the Salting collection, now in the National Gallery. Harwich Sea and Weymouth Bay! The mere titles suggest a poem.

So I delayed twenty-three hours at Parkeston Quay, purposing to visit the scene of Constable's *Harwich: Sea and Lighthouse;* later to cross the harbour to Felixstowe; to see the house where Constable lived; and then by steamer up the

Orwell to Ipswich to saunter through the lane where Gainsborough painted *The Market Cart.* Most of this programme I completed, and yet when it was all over, and I was half-way to Antwerp in mid North Sea, it was not of Constable or Gainsborough that I thought and dreamed, but of little horses going into exile, and of a sorrowful Irish stable boy who accompanied them. As I walked the deck I heard the bright creatures neighing, heard their little hoofs clanking on the boards, no doubt wondering why it was not turf, and why this odd stable rocked —poor little steeds!

The horses whinnied Constable and Gainsborough out of mind. Yet never was I less inclined to discuss horses than on the night of my arrival at Parkeston Quay, or at breakfast the following morning. But the soldier-man, on leave or half-pay, I know not which, preferred horses to painters. He was staying at the hotel, waiting to see somebody off by the boat. We sat in the smoking-room until after midnight, in adjoining easy chairs, reading old numbers of illustrated papers and older guides to picturesque places on the East Coast. Of course we did not speak. We had not been introduced. I resented his presence. He resented mine.

But at breakfast the following morning, as the sun shone and the soldier-man had eaten two chops, he broke British reserve and addressed his grievance of the moment to my newspaper. "It's shameful," he said, "this export of Irish horses to the Continent. A hundred were shipped two nights ago, and there are a lot more going this evening."

I made the suitable exclamation of sympathy with a grievance, and added, "If foreigners can pay the price for the horses, why can't we?"

"It's a mystery," he cried. "Something's brooding! A Belgian horse-dealer will give on an average one hundred and fifty pounds for an animal, and two hundred pounds each for brood mares. They leave Harwich at the rate of four hundred a week. Something's brooding."

Presently, having learned the facts, I tired of the topic, and essayed to change the conversation. "Do you know Constable's little picture of *Harwich: Sea and Lighthouse?* I rather want to find the place where he painted it."

The soldier-man made no sort of reply to my question. This did not surprise or annoy me. I have often noticed that certain men, if a question does not interest them, are able, without discourtesy, entirely to ignore it. He merely

looked fiercely at me and said, "It's scandalous. Four hundred a week."

A little later he retired to pack his bag, and I sauntered out to the railway station to inquire about the trains to Harwich town. The soldier-man appeared just before the scheduled time. He was bound for Felixstowe Ferry to do something with a gun, so we travelled part of the way together. Again I offered him Constable as a topic, tempted him with a fact. "Constable's *Harwich*, with the pearly sky and the opalescent water, is the first picture in the first room at the Tate Gallery. Number one—in Number One Room. You can't miss it."

He looked curiously at me. "What you were saying at breakfast is quite to the point. If the Belgians can afford to pay big prices for Irish horses, to re-sell them to the Germans, mind you, why can't we?"

As we crossed the harbour I indicated the mouth of the Orwell, and said, "Have you been to Ipswich? Gainsborough lived there for a time after his marriage." "There's some good fishing in the Orwell," was his answer.

We parted at the sea-front at Felixstowe. "By the by," I murmured, as he was entering a carriage to be driven to the Ferry, "can you

direct me to Constable's house?" He shook his head, gave a direction to the driver, and muttered to himself, "I'm strongly inclined to return to Parkeston Quay to-night and investigate that matter of the horses. It's a scandal. There's something brooding."

Constable's house was easily found. It is inhabited, and kept in such a beautiful state of repair and new paint that all its character has gone. I returned to Felixstowe Quay in time for the early afternoon boat to Ipswich. That must be a delightful voyage on a fine day, but as it began to rain while the steamer was battling towards the mouth of the Orwell, and as the rain descended with increasing fervour, and as the storm reached a climax as we moored against Ipswich Quay, I renounced the pleasure of seeing the lane where Gainsborough painted *The Market Cart,* and returned to Harwich in the same sodden steamer.

As we neared the quay the rain ceased, the clouds lifted at the horizon, and out of the pall of mist started a rainbow from the dull, purple background. It looked like a flaming sword, and the reflection of the glory lighted the faces of the people waiting on the quay. Among them was the soldier-man.

We greeted each other. It was a temptation to say "I'm now going to find the scene of Constable's *Harwich: Sea and Lighthouse*," but I refrained, and contented myself with "What extraordinary weather!" He seemed almost angry. "Do you know about the trains back to Parkeston Quay?" he asked. "I've been talking to an old native, and in my opinion, sir, there's something brooding."

Being a precise man I carried a time-table. "Pray keep it," I said, "I'm going to walk back," and added, when a decent distance separated us, "I'm going to find, if possible, the locality of Constable's *Harwich: Sea and Lighthouse*."

Whatever his comment was I did not hear it. Diving into narrow streets, by marine stores, soon I sniffed the sea, came out by the water, and there, yes! on this very spot Constable must have lingered to make the sketch for his little picture of *Harwich: Sea and Lighthouse*. The scene has hardly changed, although the coarse thumb of Improvements has left its imprint. The wooden look-out house or lighthouse is here still, now converted into a shelter, and if the turf-covered downs have been patted into formality, what of that? The atmosphere, the light, the large cumuli rising into a blue sky are just as clear-

eyed, childlike-hearted Constable saw them. Well content, I walked on by the sea through Dovercourt; then striking inland, swung down the hill to the railway station and quay that are trying to make Parkeston into a small town.

The boat was due to start at half-past ten, and after dining I reclined on a low chair in my room trying to write something about Constable, and to explain why, when he was painting the salt air and the sea at Harwich and Weymouth, such freshness informed his work. Well, Homer nodded, and I think I must have dozed, for I remember waking up and saying to myself, "You ought to have been dreaming of the lap of Constable's waves on the Harwich shore, but you have really been listening to the clatter of little hoofs on cobble-stones."

The odd thing was that, wide awake, I heard them still. I opened the window and looked out. The dream was not a dream. Below I saw a string of little horses, hooded and jacketed, being cajoled in turn along the gangway into a big steamer. I descended and watched them restively embarking, keeping away from the soldier-man, who was talking energetically to an official, and edging closer and closer to an Irish stable-boy, Irish mud on his leggings, the stains

of Irish rain on his coat, who was leaning against a trolly looking miserable. I edged towards the stable-boy, wondering if he would be indignant if I invited him to talk with me over a glass of the Irish whisky spirit. And all the while the procession of little horses passed on to descend, one by one, wonderingly, into the dark hold of the steamer.

Can you doubt that in mid North Sea I was not thinking of Constable or Gainsborough, but of little horses going into exile. Louder than the swish of the waves was the clatter of hoofs and their affrighted voices.

[*"Something brooding—by Jove, you were right there," said Jimmy's brother.*

"Did you ever see Constable's 'Harwich: Sea and Lighthouse?'" I asked.

"Something brooding," said Jimmy's brother. "Something brooding—by Jove, you were right there."]

III

HOW MARS SOLVED THE PROBLEM

SOMETIMES Jimmy's brother and I, looking forward, discuss the washed world after the war. He is not a good controversialist. Each sentence he utters ends with—"We must chuck out that infernal Hohenzollern lot." Knowing his sentiments I read him the following one mild evening.

* * * * * *

I have seen my friend, the Vegetarian Republican, three times since the war began. Our meetings have been in Easter week, which he always spends in London; the place a vegetarian restaurant, where they sell excellent coffee.

At Easter 1915 I asked him what he thought of the war—if it disturbed his train of thought and method of living. "Yes," he answered, after a pause; "it is like a continual toothache." He looked glum, and I noticed that his high-brow, small son was more serious than ever. Nevertheless the Vegetarian Republican was making a hearty meal.

At Easter 1916 I repeated my question. "I

feel as if I have lost my teeth," he answered. "I can't bite anything. All appetite for my ordinary avocations has gone, and my official duties no longer invigorate me." He was lunching feebly off a bun and a glass of milk.

At Easter 1917 he said: "I have become accustomed to the folly of the civilised world. I accept the conditions indignantly, but obediently. I am convinced that the only hope for the world is the abolition of dynasties and ruling castes. All must go—minor tyrants as well as major. But the examples of Russia and America have fortified me. I feel as if I have a complete set of new teeth." With that he proceeded to eat briskly from a plate of nuts; then, having sipped his coffee, he said: "Yes, ruling castes, major and minor, must be abolished. Royal enemy cousinship must cease. The people must rule, and all governing bodies must be viewed with suspicion. That is the only hope for this disordered world. What do you think of the war?

* * * * * *

For a second or two I eyed him vacantly, and then I decided to recount an experience that bears immediately upon the conflict. "Listen," I said, "you are a psychic; you will not be surprised at what I am about to tell you":—

It was the last day of what has been called the Victory War Loan; it was early in the morning, and I was waiting, with others, at a country railway station, for the train to take us to London. Suddenly I was aware of a curious being standing near me. He was a visitor from Mars. There could be no doubt about his identity. I was not surprised because, after three years of civilised warfare, I am incapable of being surprised at anything.

The Martian indicated three soldiers carrying guns and the paraphernalia of their profession, who were evidently returning to the Front after a short leave. "A type new to me," he said. "Pray, what is their occupation?"

"Their occupation," I answered, "is to kill Germans. We have trained about six million men for this purpose."

The Martian, who is what we call unmoral, made a note of this information in his pocket-book.

"And those," he asked, "what are they?" He indicated a group of prosperous citizens, rotund and fur-coated.

"Those," I answered, "are bankers and wealthy actuaries. They are travelling to town earlier than usual, so that they may have extra

time to invest other people's money in the new War Loan."

The Martian again wrote in his pocket-book. "I presume," he said, "to obtain more money to kill more Germans?"

"Precisely."

"And those dear little children, to each of whom one of the wealthy citizens has just given a coin. I presume they will not buy sweets with the money?"

"Oh, no. They will place the coins in their money-boxes, and, when they have accumulated enough, war certificates will be bought for them."

"To provide additional money to kill more Germans?"

"Yes."

*   *   *   *   *   *

The Martian made another entry, and then closed his note-book. "The present object of your country, I gather, is to exterminate Germans?"

"Yes, in order that the world may live in peace and progress."

"I quite understand," said the Martian. "We had a similar trouble in Mars. But being a much older and a much wiser nation than yours we adopted saner methods. But we made mis-

takes, too, at the beginning. When a dynastical war broke out between the two chief Confederate States of Mars it was of course agreed that only men over fifty, and invalids, should fight. Your method of killing youth is worse than barbarous; it is silly. But our method, even, did not answer. An enormous number of invalids and elderly politicians died lingering and uncomfortable deaths; but still the war continued."

"Why?"

"Because the rulers of the various States had relatives at enemy Courts, and our abundant killing of enemy invalids and fire-eating sexagenarians was rendered nugatory by the treachery of enemy aunts, uncles, and cousins—chiefly aunts. Therefore we adopted drastic measures. We formed a League of Peaceable People, which the proletariat of all the warring nations immediately joined. One spring night, by arrangement, we killed all the Rulers and their relatives throughout Mars. That helped, but it was not enough; so we slew the Lords, the Commons, County Councillors, everybody who had anything to do with governance. It took some time, because many of the Rural District Councils were situated beyond railways. But in time all were killed, down to the junior members of the

remotest Rural District Councils. Then Mars had peace—lasting peace. Nobody had the least desire to form any kind of a governing body, because he knew that if he did so he would be immediately slain. Everybody in Mars is now law-abiding; by that I mean he just lives quietly and contentedly, quite as eager after his neighbour's happiness as his own. There are no churches, because everybody is religious. Theatres are free, and beer is a penny a pint."

* * * * * *

While I was giving this information to the Vegetarian Republican, I noticed that he became more and more agitated. Ere I had quite finished he clapped his wideawake upon his head.

"What is the matter with your father?" I whispered to his small, serious son. "Why is he upset?"

The boy answered: "Father is a member of the Slibby-on-Solent Rural District Council."

* * * * * *

"Good," said Jimmy's brother. "Topping!"

IV

THE CONSOLER

IN those days when, to my great sorrow, the guidance of Jimmy had faded, I would cast about seeking other consolations in this grief-stricken world. One evening I picked this article from the pile and read it aloud to Jimmy's brother.

* * * * * *

This high meadow, on the right day, and with the right Companion, may be the way to Heaven. My companion, when he is happy, which is not always, for he is not yet sufficiently advanced continuously to see reality through the mists of unreality, when, I say, he is happy, I glean through him glimpses of that invisible kingdom of the soul, which is Heaven. But I don't tell him.

Sapling trees marked the confines of this rolling green space open to the public for ever; beyond, on the next hill, always seen, are the two places of worship, the mother buildings. A lark was singing above, a child was trying to fly

a kite, and all around, sweeping to the hilly, wooded horizons, was infinity. An old man, wintry but hale, passed us. He paused, smiled, and said twice, "All is well." When he had passed on my Companion remarked, "He was like Luka."

"Who is Luka?" I asked.

"Luka," said my Companion, "is an eternal type who recurs and recurs, and who never dies because he is born of the spirit. Through all history he emerges at different times, in all countries; he is the consoler; he knows. I met him last night in the far East-End of London, I saw him in a dreadful play of genius by Maxim Gorki called 'The Lower Depths,' a wonderful play that harrows and uplifts. It uplifts because Luka, a pilgrim, a wayfarer, a bird of passage, passes through the horrors, and wherever he goes all is well. I have copied out all that Luka says—that haunting passage about the Land of Righteousness; his answer to Pepel's question—'Is there a God?' Luka replied in a low voice (that is the stage direction), 'If you believe it—there is!' And it was Luka who said, 'There can't be no good in forgettin' what yer loved. Where yer love there's all yer soul,' and 'Who wishes—finds . . . who wishes

strongly—finds!' Bacon was a kind of Luka."

"Bacon? Do you mean the great Bacon—'The Advancement of Learning' chap—the 'wisest, brightest, meanest of mankind?' "

"Yes! I don't read him—who does?—but I did read Arthur Balfour's speech when he unveiled the statue to Bacon, and when I had read a passage half-way down I read no more. I had all I wanted. This it was: 'Bacon is never tired of telling us that the Kingdom of Nature, like the Kingdom of God, can only be entered by those who approach it in the spirit of a child.' "

"I suppose you would say that Bacon had gleams of the Truth when his intellect was still, and that when all the world has the one mind, as reflected by the Luka pilgrims, then the Kingdom of God will be here."

"Surely," said my companion.

The golden afternoon waned to a greater beauty. In the distance we saw little husbands, carrying little black bags, entering the gates of little gardens. A motor-car sped along the distant road, and my companion said, "I met a Luka last night. He happened to be young, but he was a Luka. I was not seeking him. I was experimenting in a motor bus route. Often and often have I gone westward by No. 25. Yes-

terday, having a free evening, I took the eastward journey wondering whither it would lead me. A strange, new country it was, miles of streets and crowds—through Stratford and Romford to Ilford. My mind was a jumble of impressions, but one thing remained distinct. Outside the Stratford Town Hall was a long queue of people waiting for the doors to open—for what kind of entertainment do you think? To hear a Christian Science lecture! There was the placard on the door in large letters. On the return journey from Ilford, when we re-passed the Stratford Town Hall, I alighted and went up the steps. The hall was packed. I could not get in. I sat in a chair in the vestibule. Someone came and talked to me about loving and giving in a new way. I looked at him. I listened. I wondered. He, too, was Luka.

The sun was now sinking. The folded hours were near.

We rose to go, and, passing down the hill, met the old man who was like Luka in the play, patiently showing the child, who was petulant and tearful, how to make his kite soar.

"How gentle he is!" I remarked.

The old man overheard, gave us his quiet

smile, and said: "It's the knocks I've 'ad; they've made me gentle."

My companion looked strangely at me. "Do you know," he whispered, "that Luka uses those very words in the play, at the end of the first act?"

[*"You give me the blues," said Jimmy's brother. "What do you all mean? You make me want to rush to my Intensive Culture garden, and dig, and sweat. But Jimmy would have understood."*

"Yes," I said, "Jimmy—understands."]

V

JIMMY'S DIARY

HOW strange it is that we should continually be saying to one another—"Jimmy would have understood," or "Jimmy understands." Because he is gone—irretrievably. That is the dominant, and unutterably hopeless fact. Oh, how I struggled to recapture the sense of Jimmy's nearness. It was impossible. I seemed to have grown hard and unconcerned. A dead weight of indifference had settled upon me, and my mind avoided the spiritual gropings that Jimmy valued. They seemed visionary, inopportune, in the dread, daily reminders of the war.

This horrid symptom of war-weariness is not uncommon. I believe the explanation is that the spirit, after a long stress of intense activity, grows fatigued, like the body, and must rest and recuperate. Little did I think that our wonderful Jimmy in his Diary had considered this ebb of the spirit, and, being pure of heart, had found the simple remedy.

But in those days I did not know of the rem-

edy, and through the long weeks that Jimmy's brother sojourned with me, I had no gleam of its appealing efficacy. A hallucination of that period was that the war was normal, that it didn't matter, that the old days would never return. I heard of the death of young friends on the field of honour with horrible equanimity as if this holocaust of youth, like illness and age, was the lot of men. The waste of life, the purposelessness of it all, the incredible folly of a world war, swamped feeling. Every avenue of hope or progress seemed to be barred by the surge of the war. Nothing came to fulfilment. Victory—check; prospects of peace—check; consolation in religion—check.

I attended church often, but remained outside of it all. The appeal of the liturgy, the reading of the Bible stimulated me as of yore, but I knew that it was emotional. It touched my senses, never my spirit. Did one need God? Jimmy's brother, I observed, could get on quite well without Him, and without even curiosity as to the survival of the individual after death. Yet Jimmy's brother fumbled with all the externals of relief. I took him to church one evening, and noticed that he fiercely faced the east during the Creed, and genuflected promptly at the

name of Jesus. That evening after supper, when the Others had been singing "Eternal Father, Strong to Save" (a nephew is on a Destroyer), I turned to Jimmy's brother and said—"Do you believe in the Eternal Father?"

He answered briskly—"Of course I do. Every decent man does. Why shouldn't I? What?"

But did Jimmy's brother really believe in the Eternal Father? I think not. You cannot believe in something to which you give not the slightest attention. And he told me that the phrase "doing God's will," meant as little to him as doing the sun or moon's will. When I said to him one day that the most helpful line of poetry in the language was Dante's "In His will is our peace," he answered "Rats!" No, I don't think Jimmy's brother believes in the Eternal Father. Moreover, again and again he has informed me that he is a Fatalist.

So with the unending agony of the war and the cheerful agnosticism of the young Fatalist's company, I grew into the condition of believing that Jimmy, being dead, had ceased to be. I walked up to Roof Hill one evening and tried to recapture the emotions of that night when I had played sentinel, and Jimmy had spoken to me.

It was of no avail. I was conscious only of emptiness, and something that approached boredom. The spirit slept. A kind of panic seized me, and I thought what a dreadful thing life could be if interest in it should depart, if the morning never again brought a renewal of hope and purpose. I returned home despairfully and read through some of the essays that I was preparing for the book. Oh, how I envied the buoyant mood in which occasionally they were written, the sense of irresponsible spiritual gaiety. Re-reading them did not give me any pleasure. They were pre-war. That put them out of court. It seemed almost sacrilege to be playing with such themes in these dread days.

"Read me something," said Jimmy's brother, who had watched me blearing over the articles.

I began one called "The Open Gate," that, at the time of writing, I thought was fine; but I soon commenced to skip, and to stammer, which I always do when bored. There was something in it about an autumn-coloured dog, and about Novalis who said "Life is not a goal, only a means," and that "Death accelerates our way to perfection." And at the end was the quotation:

"O give me, God, the stainless white
That lines the sea-bird's wing,
To keep the sooty Thames in sight
And holy songs to sing."

When I had finished, Jimmy's brother said—"I give you Novalis and the sooty Thames poet. What became of the autumn-coloured dog?"

"He lived three years, and then died of over-eating."

"And Novalis of under-eating. What a world!"

Of course the proper course for me was to throw myself into arduous war-work. But the state of my health forbade it. I tried something, but I was more trouble than service. On one occasion I did help Jimmy's brother to plant seed-potatoes after he had prepared a ten-rod couch-grass allotment, but when I paused for a minute to explain to him that planting was a Sacrament he threw a spade at me and said—"Jawing doesn't get the taters in." Then he wiped his brow, screwed up his artificial leg, and vigorously attacked the couch-grass. He was always happy when he was perspiring violently. "One day's digging," he would say, "does me more good than a baker's dozen of sacraments.

Man was made for the soil, not to fiddle round with dreams."

Often I wondered what freak of atavism had made him and Jimmy brothers.

It was on the evening of the day after the potato sowing, that the precious packet reached me. It came from Jimmy's father, that old, ill man; and I believe he meant it as a valedictory gift, realising that he was slipping from the world, and knowing how I loved his son.

The packet was Jimmy's Diary, and contained his record of thoughts, inquiries, and darts at Truth. It was more a commonplace-book than a Diary, a means of finding a way toward's a coherent expression of his ultimate beliefs. His method was to ask himself a question, and to answer it, sometimes fragmentarily. Often an answer consisted of a few lines only, but he never made an erasure or an alteration. His perception of Truth was so clear, his thoughts so candid, that he had the power of saying, with a running pen, precisely what he purposed saying. Towards the end of the book were two essays of a more formal character. Indeed, they were quite complete, as if he felt able to answer, fully, the questions that stood at the head of each.

Those questions were—I. "Why Should I be Good?" II. "Why Should I Paint Landscapes?"

That was so like Jimmy—to codify his perplexities, dreams, and aspirations into the answers to two straightforward questions, quite simple, yet surveying the two ardent prepossessions of his life—ethics and art.

I read the essays with profound interest. I agreed entirely, but realised, with sorrow, that my interest in them was intellectual. They did not bring Jimmy nearer to me. He spoke, but it was from the grave. Yet those essays prepared the way for the continued presence of my Invisible Guide. Here they are, printed just as Jimmy wrote them.

VI

WHY SHOULD I BE GOOD?

JIMMY'S ANSWER

"I HAVE always known that the problems of existence are simple if we approach them with the candour of a child—that is, with a pure heart and an unsullied outlook. This means that I must answer the question—"Why Should I Be Good?" as if there was nothing else in the Universe but myself and that question. If all the rest of the world were blotted out, and I alone, it would still remain the supreme interrogation. The faith of man, his creeds, symbols and thoughts may aid me later to strengthen my faith, but nothing can really help me until my own consciousness of the spiritual world is so fixed that no shock of the material world can effect any change. So in answering this question I must look for no help anywhere except from God working through myself.

Here I smile, because the question is so difficult, and so simple. I smile because of the temptations that assail me to make the answer

difficult. All theology, all the learned and pious people who have been since man first tottered under the sun, and wondered, rise up and tempt me to flounder in the slough of controversy. Whereas God being Spirit—Perfection, Principle, Essential Goodness, the Great Architect—is above controversy, above words, and above definitions. Moreover, and this is supremely important, He, being Spirit, can only be approached spiritually. If I slit the drum, the sound goes. I keep God intact, undefined, unvexed. I can only say what He is to me. No man can do more.

I state that God is the Originator, Architect, and Eternal Ruler of the spiritual world, which is incessantly active, and if we desire it, as near to us as the material world. I state that religion, pure and undefiled, consists entirely of God, that is, of essential goodness and wisdom. Also that God desires us to be happy, as He is happy; but He cannot force us to be happy because He, being Perfection, is not cognisant of unhappiness. Neither can He prevent us from rebelling against Him because He, being Perfection, is not cognisant of rebellion. The world is unhappy now because it is in a state of rebellion against goodness. It is suffering from Sin; it is suf-

fering because, as congeries of kingdoms, it has failed to hit the mark of goodness. Individuals do, in increasing numbers. States do not. Hence war. Obviously the way of peace is to cease to rebel. God cannot stop the war because He, being Perfection, is not cognisant of bloodshed.

I am happy although I am fighting, and daily seeing sights that should make man slink with his face covered for the rest of his days for sheer shame of his species; I am happy because my hold on the spiritual life is so strong that no vicissitude of the material world can affect it. Under the direst conditions I commune with God, and derive from that conversation (I prefer the word "conversation" to "prayer") a strength, a confidence, a serenity that never fails. The more I ask, the more I receive. This is a simple truth which I prove hourly. No fact of the material world, neither conception nor wireless, has ever astonished me so much as the discovery that the supply from the spiritual world is inexhaustible. There is an added joy, which is the best of all. I can pass on my God-given strength to such of my men, who, not being so far advanced spiritually, need it. I never talk religion to them. I do it. There is no vanity in the process. If

there were I should have failed. I have outgrown self-consciousness. It went when I reasoned that it was inimical to God. It comes to this: I, like many others, have found the way to this brimming fountain of spiritual strength—that's all. So I influence by merely being on God's side. I, if I be lifted up, etc. It was Tolstoy who said—"There is only one way of serving mankind, that is, to become better yourself."

This power of influence, by just being, this spiritual law, has a terrible reverse side. The laws of the material world, I take it, are imitations of the laws in the spiritual world. As we influence for good in the spiritual world, so we influence for ill in the material world. The innocent receive the good and prosper spiritually, the innocent also receive the ill and suffer materially. But as evil cannot enter into the spiritual world any more than it can enter into the cognisance of God, it follows that in the spiritual world there exists a justice which nothing can impair. In the material world, where evils enters, always the result of fear, or envy, or covetousness, there is no justice. This war! The innocent suffer intolerably because the evil was unloosed through the greed of one nation, the members of which had been hypnotised, to material

issues, by their military rulers. We cannot escape consequences, cannot avoid material tribulations arising from the evil thoughts around us, although we can do something, when we side with God, to protect ourselves from their tyranny. But no material tribulations can separate us from the love of God, that is, from the repose and joy of living, even intermittently, according to spiritual laws.

How did I attain to them? First, it was necessary to blot out all the past of dogma, creeds, and controversies. I wiped the slate. What remained? God remained. The road towards Perfection is not through complexities. There is no mystery, no openings for neurosis or emotion. Just an understanding of God—no more than that.

The way is difficult because we are rebels, even the best of us, against Perfection. We desire, even the best of us, our way, not God's way. So the churches have, wisely or unwisely, invented disciplinary methods whereby men and women can be directed in the way of a return to God. They have invented official prayers and praises, confession, self-examination, asceticism, all bewildering, and spiritually deadening, encumbered paths, twisty and tangled, on a road

which should be a journey of joy, a running forward gaily to the gate of our old, real home.

No one can help us along the spiritual highway: there is no adventitious aid. I and you, through God, are the only architects of our spiritual edifices. But the building needs continuous and concentrated work. Every desire of the healthy, material body protests. But the individual can progress, if he works simply and naturally, scaling the smallest barriers first, and using God as a spiritual and engaging Companion, not as an Anthropomorphic Deity who desires praise and penitence. Foolish! Foolish! He desires us only to be good and happy, as He is.

The spiritual laws have to be investigated and proved with the same fervour and diligence as the material laws. If a man would give such application to the understanding of the laws of God's kingdom as he gives to the acquisition of a foreign language, he would be amazed at the results. Difficulties of daily life fall away. Avenues of undreamed enjoyment open. If the years that a youth gives to a Call to the Bar were given to this quest he would be initiate on the threshold of life. A course of theological training rarely accomplishes this as the student is

only learning what other men have thought about God's kingdom. They have approached it through the intellect; they acquire and discard; they flounder in controversy; they strain their brains, whereas the only approach to God's kingdom is through the heart.

I admit that there may be many who need the discipline of college, convent or theological course to open a wicket-gate to the spiritual world. I was most fortunate in not needing such aids, owing to temperament, and wise up-bringing. I always enjoyed the religious atmosphere. I like attending churches, although I have long been well aware that spiritual reality being in the heart, cannot be in a building, however consecrated and conforming to the forms, symbols, and shibboleths of religion. I am indeed fortunate in having the religious temperament which may be the memory of ante-natal religious experience. I remember, when I first joined a club and discovered in myself an aptitude for billiards which I enjoyed, that a friend, one Wednesday evening, invited me to take part in a game of snooker pool.

"Sorry, I can't," I replied. "I'm going to church."

"Wh-a-t? Why go to church on a weekday?"

"Because I like it better than snooker pool."

Everything external is an accessory. I go to services still, but they are an aid to the recognition of spiritual forces only, a sign, like a ribbon on the uniform. Everything is accessory except the one supreme fact that God is ever present, and that he is comrade and captain in one. He needs no help because in Himself He embraces everything. He is all in all.

As more and more individuals hold this certainty, the kingdom of God, which is knowledge of the laws of the spiritual world, will draw near. By that way, and by no other, wars will cease, with all the abuses that discolour civilisation, for no nation can be covetous, and no man can oppress his neighbour, when all are on God's side. So arises this glorious certainty: the world will be saved by its individuals, not by its governments. I and you. You and I. We can begin this eternal moment.

The aim of each individual's life should be clear—to increase his percentage of spiritual knowledge, from the poor one per cent., or so, that most of us possess, upwards to the five or ten per cent., or more, that spiritual seers have had, here and there, since the world began, keeping always before us the goal of earthly spiritual

knowledge—the ninety per cent. that Jesus Christ possessed. The fight is hard and long, because no progress can be made while self is humoured. No one can advance in spiritual knowledge so long as he places his own passions before the passion for God. No one can be good unless he makes good his God.

Have I answered the question—"Why Should I be Good?" In a hundred ways I prove in my life, daily, that there is nothing else to be.

Nothing else gives permanent satisfaction.

Nothing else supplies a meaning to every hour of every day.

Nothing else could bear me, serenely and with hope, through the horrors of this war.

I must be good because I am unhappy when I am not good, and there is no lasting way of being good except by living and working on God's side.

Why God is good I do not know. He is, and Christ showed us the height and depth of His goodness.

Why Jesus Christ should have been singled out for this honour I do not know any more than I know why great musicians, or great poets, are what they are. Christ was a Spiritual genius. I am content to be guided by Him (but not by what theologians have invented about Him) be-

cause He knew more of the secret workings of spiritual laws than anyone who has ever lived. I follow Him because the great extent of His knowledge confirms my gropings towards an understanding of God.

I am good because it is, surpassingly, the best thing that this life offers. All other aims bring satiety. Being good, and keeping it secret, is the only human effort that saves more than it spends.

Be good—and don't tell. That's the motto for the New Man.

VII

WHY SHOULD I PAINT LANDSCAPES?

JIMMY'S ANSWER

"WHY—anything? But I must know why. It is my nature. I have no peace of mind until I know why.

As a child I fumbled with drawing trees and skies because that interested me more than anything else in my child's world. It was an instinct such as a bee has to gather honey. Therein I was most fortunate. It was a free gift to me, like a faculty for science or song. I doubt if more than ten per cent. of children have an instinct for any particular vocation. I had two, art and ethics, but art was paramount. Now ethics stand first, because I am no longer young, and because of the war. The two have grown, side by side, as I have grown, one helping, and eventually explaining the other. My case is quite normal. Had I been a genius I should have been abnormal. I am merely a man with some talent of vision and delicate perceptions. Should I survive this war I believe that

I shall be a better painter because warfare vitalises vision. It does not change; nothing but a change of heart changes: it intensifies. I see in nature more than I ever saw before—incredibly more. Colour, form, structure, design even have new meanings for me. If I survive, and can persuade my technique to keep pace with my vision, I shall become quite a decent landscape painter.

How fortunate I was in being born with a desire. To paint landscapes was stronger with me than food, drink, friendships, sport, sweethearts, and other pleasures.

My first stage was simple and regular. I painted—for love. I studied for love. Love of my work shaped me into a young god striding through morning freshness. Then came my temptation, the serpent in my Garden of Eden, which comes to all. It became necessary that what I had done for love must be done for a living. The serpent approached. The creature was neither scaly nor grovelling. It approached with gifts, with comforts, applause and a variety of other enjoyments. How did I receive the engaging creature? That is a question that every artist must answer, and, on the answer, depends the quality of his art throughout his life. Again

I was fortunate because, by temperament, I did not desire the things that most people desire. It was no victory. I simply didn't want them. I have wanted so few things. I have never in my life had a silk hat, or a bicycle, or a starched shirt. I was always a believer in the Buddhist Illusion. Most things are Illusion. A delicate digestion has debarred me from experimenting with costly foods and drinks, and until the outbreak of war I lived in a commodious barn on a moor. My brother, who is a medical student, once summed me up thus—"Jimmy," he said, "is, spiritually, hot stuff."

As I never exhibited pictures, and as since my student days I have never visited exhibitions, the pangs of competition and jealousy did not assail me. Yet I sold my pictures, which were always small, and usually such themes as "A White Barn Seen Through Apple Blossom," "Shades of Green Against a Vast Sky," "Black Crows on Spring Grass," "Red Roofs and Tree Tops Against Sky," "Fallow Land in Planes of Colour."

I sold my pictures to people who came to the barn. The prices gave me no trouble, as I merely calculated my expenses for the week and added twenty-five per cent. That was my

method. It never altered. I imagine that I am the only living landscape painter who has never sold a picture for more than five pounds.

I take no credit for this way of painting and living. It was, for me, the line of least resistance. But we are so designed that every individual has his private, particular and peculiar temptations, subtly suited to his temperament. Their subtlety is sometimes almost unbelievably apt and disguised. It looks like a butterfly: it is really a vulture.

My temptation glided towards me in the guise of doubts and fears, which quickly developed into depression. For I had begun to ask myself why I painted pictures—to what end. You see, the first intensity of desire for self-expression, which acts and doesn't reason, was leaving me. I had to seek a substitute for enthusiasm. Many find it in ambition, in competition, in the necessity of meeting an ever-increasing expenditure. Such motives passed me by. I pitted my art against nobody's, and if my weekly expenditure rose, which was rare, I increased the price of the week's picture. There was always a buyer waiting, as I was fanciful about only allowing, what I considered the worthy ones, to leave the barn.

My temptation, which almost wrecked me, was

of a different kind, and was neatly adapted to test my temperament. It sprang, I think, from my interest in ethics. Certainly it was ethical in character. Always, deep in my heart, I had been aware that mere pleasure and profit in work was insufficient. There must be a purpose, transcending self, and working towards an object which, in human phraseology, may be described as—doing God's will. Were my little landscapes doing that?

That question drove me into inertia. I could not work. I could paint no more landscapes until I had decided, in some way or another, that they were doing God's will, and illuminating the road for some of my fellow-creatures.

I began to despair. That was my subtle temptation—despair. I lost tone. My fibre loosened. I no longer rose at sunrise, and when I went out I loafed, trying to untangle the knot into which my purpose in life had become tied. Why should I paint? Why should I do anything? Why was I alive?

My interest in ethics saved me, steered my steps to the right road. I awoke. The awakening came to me one day in a flash, but analysis has since told me that the flash was but the spark ignited of my metaphysical preparations. I

saw in a flash how this command to do God's will could be accommodated to my landscape paintings. My ethical studies, and also my metaphysical intuitions had told me that all the evil in the world is man-made, that God being Perfection, originator and doer of all truth and beauty, knows nothing of the evil that man has made, and functions only to bring us back to Truth and Beauty, which is happiness. Therefore, as the material world is but a reflection of the spiritual world, I, in my small way as landscape painter, could try to remind people of Eternal Beauty.

And there was something more which hardened this idea into a fact. I have always held that the legends of the Old Testament are based, often clumsily, always romantically, upon truths. The Legend of the Fall of Man implies a former state of happiness from which he fell when he sought his own material ends, in preference to spiritual ends. As I reflected upon this there came dimly into my mind the hypothesis called Ancestral Memory, and at once my depression began to disappear. Memory! memory! When, in a serene mood, I have been alone, painting some sight so beautiful that I despaired of interpreting it, I have become aware

that memory held a still more beautiful vision of the scene before me. So one day the full answer to the quesiton, "Why Should I Paint Landscapes?" was revealed. By so doing I could remind my fellow-creatures of the original beauty which man inherited, from which he has fallen away, to which he must eventually return, because the love of God, which is Beauty, as it is everything else that is beautiful, wills this return. All life is but a wandering to find home, and the landscape painter lures the wanderer back by reminding him of the beauty which is his birthright. This he can do, even it be in the tongue of the nursery: he can re-state the imagination of God.

So I was happy again. I had refound the road. My art had a purpose.

Then happened, what so often happens, when a man has found himself, through himself. Confirmation of my discovery was given to me. In the "Note-Books of Francis Thompson," that poet, that seer, I found this illuminating passage:

'The world—the Universe—is a fallen world. When people try to understand the Divine plans, they forget that everything is not as it was designed to be. And with regard to any given thing you have first to discover, if

you can, how far it is as it was meant to be. That should be precisely the function of poetry—to see and restore the Divine idea of things, freed from the disfiguring accidents of their Fall.'

That, also, should be precisely the function of landscape painting—to see and restore the Divine idea of things, freed from the disfiguring accidents of their Fall.

So I took up my brushes again, and have never since doubted that in painting for Him, not for myself, I am doing His Will. In which is peace."

VIII

JIMMY'S DOUBLE

THERE were other passages in Jimmy's Diary which showed the grip and sweep of his intellectual equipment. Indeed, with the exception of the essays printed in the last two chapters, most of the fragments were intellectual exercises. Reading them, I recognised his mentality, but they did not bring his beloved presence to me as on that mystical night upon Roof Hill.

How fine was the fragment called "The Bud and The Comet," a study of the tiny and the tremendous which showed a profound knowledge of botany and astronomy. He speculated for a page on Space, prompted by the rush of Wolf's Comet, which is travelling at the rate of nine million miles in a week.

So moved was I with his speculations upon Space that I found the room narrow and confined, and, as I had an appointment in London that evening I suddenly determined to tramp

across country for five miles, and pick up the London train at the junction.

In the inn where I rested I met Jimmy's Double. I shall always associate him with Jimmy, because he, too, was interested in astronomy, and because . . .

Some were waiting for dinner, some for the rain to cease. I strolled towards the porch. It was still drizzling. Through the flying clouds gleamed patches of stars. I was about to set forth on the dreary walk to the station, when suddenly, the dim avenue was illuminated from the rays of two powerful lamps advancing quickly. Hastily I stepped back into the porch, and a long, grey motor drew up at the door. The driver alighted and rang the bell; a porter appeared and tucked a bag into the car; the Stranger scrambled to his seat behind the driving-wheel, then turning quickly, he regarded me keenly and said—"London bound?" "Yes!" "I'll give you a lift if you like."

I accepted with gratitude and took the seat beside him. Why not? I am not worth stealing. There was another reason. Something in his gesture, in his movement, reminded me of Jimmy. It was odd. I glanced at him again. "You might be Jimmy's double," I said to my-

self. We swept down and round the avenue at a reckless pace, yet he inspired confidence, but I wished that he would refrain from throwing back his head at intervals to peer, with rapt look, at the stars. After one of these fugitive glances at immensity he said—"Infinite space is an awe inspiring thought, yet it's consolatory. You can't worry when you feel yourself part of the whole with the Everlasting Arms beneath. What does it all mean? Are the myriads of other worlds inhabited? The nearest of the fixed stars is anything between twenty and thirty billions of miles away from us. And that star in the Pleiades—I remember the Pleiades from the Bible, why, there's a star there, dear me, I quite forget the name, the light from which takes two hundred years to reach us. It would be fine to be an astronomer. Somebody called astronomy re-thinking the thoughts of God. Just look at that cluster of stars over there above the trees. Aren't you taken off your feet? Can't you feel yourself lost, immersed in infinity? Look!"

I did not look, for just then the motor gave an ugly swerve, barely escaping a collision with a lumbering van. My companion made no comment. His inclination to astronomy had cer-

tainly given him amazing confidence as a motorist.

The rain became heavier. I had no regrets, because rain meant opaque clouds and a starless sky, which might induce my companion to concentrate his attention on the slippery road. Suddenly there was a hoot behind us. A car tried to pass. He laughed, did something to something, jerked at something else, and we shot ahead. He laughed again—"Do you remember Tennyson's gruff comment after looking through a telescope at the great nebula in Perseus?—'One doesn't think much of the county families after that.' "

The pattering rain had become a consistent downpour. We stopped. He alighted to fix the hood above our heads, a wet, messy and tedious operation. When all was taut he remained out in the rain bare-headed, looking up at the sky. "The stars are all gone," he said sadly. "I feel friendless."

When we reached the beginning of the tramway system I made a banal remark about the advantage to outlying London of that method of transit. He ignored my statement. The mind of Jimmy's Double was working on other matters. "I read somewhere the other day," he

said, "that all theological students ought to have a thorough grounding in astronomy. I agree. We're too much concerned with ourselves. What we need is broader views, wider horizons. We want to be reminded of light, not of gloom. Now that Indian poet—what's his name?"

"Rabindranath Tagore," I suggested.

"Yes, that's the man. He gives us light, he breeds hope, he shows us that the stars are gleaming even if the clouds hide them. He wrote an article somewhere on that wonderful Eastern book—I've forgotten the name, I'm bad at names, but I remember (he laughed) that the last syllable was the name of a fish—shad, shads."

"The Upanishads," I suggested.

"Yes, that's it—you know everything. In his article Tagore quotes a sentence from 'The Upanishads' which has fixed itself in my memory: 'Man becomes true if in this life he can understand God; if not, it is the greatest calamity.' That simple, profound statement did me more good than any amount of novels and plays."

This strange man continued to talk, opening his heart to me as we splashed through the muddy streets. The flaring shops, the bedraggled wayfarers, and the noises of London seemed a dream.

In the Edgware Road, near a fried-fish shop, we were held up for five minutes by a fallen horse. It was there that he said—oblivious of the surroundings—"All our difficulties arise because most of us have forgotten that the aim of life is just to be good, to understand God and to strive to be like Him, so simple to the pure in heart, so horribly difficult to the others. That Eastern book also says, 'When God is truly known all fetters fall.' We make our own fetters. God, it's my belief, knows nothing about our fetters. Begin to break them, and we begin to understand Him. I'm learning."

I tried to see his face, but the hood covered it. I tried again, because I had the strange feeling that I was talking to Jimmy. And he, while he was talking, was invisible.

He drove me to my destination, and while I was trying to stammer my thanks for his courtesy and for his conversation, he said—"Oh! that's nothing. I've talked myself into a good mood. It's the stars. They always lift me up. They make me understand. We'll part now while I'm at my best. Remember me so."

[*I did remember him, and I remember the sentence he quoted—"Man becomes true if in*

this life he can understand God." I *recalled what Jimmy had said to me on Roof Hill—"When you lose emotion and acquire understanding I shall be always with you. Understanding?"*

"Why are you so quiet?" said my host. "What's in your mind?"

"Jimmy," I answered.]

PART III

HIS GUIDANCE RETURNS

I

THE POSTCARDS OF JIMMY'S BROTHER

AGAIN I was alone save for the neighbourhood of the Others. They are much to me, but as they are not principals in this narrative, they remain ministering, but tenuous. I was alone because Jimmy's brother had gone to stay with his father, who is worse after the treatment prescribed by the sixth specialist he has consulted within the past two years. The departure of Jimmy's brother had been even more abrupt than his usual spasdomic movements. One day, after a chirpy comment on one of my articles, he announced that he had decided to become an Intensive Culture farmer, on the French, Belgian, Danish System (he didn't say which) —"That is as soon as I can get a bit of rhino. A one-legged man can cart manure all right, and he saves in boot-leather. An article of yours about tulip-culture put me on the track, and I got hot after reading a report of a French-Belgian garden near London which raised nine hundred pounds an acre by Intensive Culture. That's

my game. I'll combine it with doctoring. I'll be a shilling country doctor, and a grower of appetising vegetables."

The next day Jimmy's brother went to London, and presently I discovered that an old idea of his had taken shape.

He had given me a hint as to its nature when he had said—"I know what's the matter with Dad. The specialists are all wrong. I know. The wounded—God, those wounded, taught me. I can cure Dad, you bet! I can diagnose his case on my head."

For a week I heard nothing from him. Then one of his staccato postcards arrived. It said—"Am visiting all the Intensive Culture Gardens, and I'm going to cure Dad. Butler will operate on my diagnosis. If I can scrape the money together I shall become a pupil in a crack Intensive Garden. It's good business."

Later we heard that the operation on his father had been very successful, and, to one of the Others, Jimmy's brother wrote a few explanatory lines. He used technical terms, but in plain language it meant that Papa Carstairs's trouble and loss of leg-power had arisen from a tumour pressing upon the spine, due, no doubt, primarily, to his fall from the aeroplane. Jimmy's

brother had discovered this through his knowledge of shrapnel splinters in the region of the spine, and the many operations at which he had assisted in France. He had advised the operation upon his father, and had convinced Butler, who had performed it "very successfully."

Three more postcards came from Jimmy's brother in the course of the next three months. The first said—"Dad has moved his legs." The second said—"Dad has walked round the room." The third said—"Dad has given me a thousand pounds, so now I can start Intensive Farming proper."

* * * * * *

And I, being alone, free from all distracting, if pleasant influences, drew nearer to Jimmy again. I re-read his letters and Diary. I pondered on the vital comparison he drew between doing "one's best" and doing "the best," that is, God's best. I re-read the long letter wherein he argued, so sanely and temperately, that man must go to school to win success in the spiritual world, as he goes to school to win success in the material world. Jimmy's brother, I reflected, wants to be an intensive farmer, so he works at it, gives it his whole mind, becomes a pupil. Who elects to be a pupil in the spiritual world?

I started on the adventure by resuming an old habit, long, alas, abandoned, of devoting a quarter of an hour each morning—no more, no less—to simple excursions thither by way of spiritual exercises, which I discovered, to my joy, meant a closer companionship with Jimmy. The results of that quarter of an hour devoted to spiritual exercises were surprising. He returned to me. I lived with him. That intercourse was the completest pleasure I have ever had.

Those were joyful days. My interest in life had returned. I was myself again, because I had at last renounced the morphia. In the beginning the drug was necessary to allay the agony that followed the radium treatment after my operation. As the pain increased so did the injections of morphia, until I was taking ten grains each day. When the pain passed I still needed the morphia—terribly. Then followed a fight of nearly two years. Had it not been for the loving care of one who is nearest and dearest to me, the victory would never have been won. We did not speak of the contest, but I hoped that the dose was being decreased. One night I said—"I'll take no more. I can do without it." Whereupon she laughed and said—

"You've been taking nothing but water for a month."

I turned to the article that I had written in the early days of the morphia, when it was a blessing, before it had become a curse. I read it through with some wonderment.

II

MORPHIA

THE pain had persisted for weeks.

Sometimes it came in paroxysms; then it was merely a dull ache; then another paroxysm; then brief, blessed relief, when I learnt the meaning of the word "blessed." The persistence of the pain wore me down. I lost perspective. I could not reason myself back to joy. And yet through it all, not entirely in the blessed intervals of relief, I had a glimmer, a dim consciousness, illogical, not to be explained, that often I was happier than I had ever been before. Some strange re-birth was stirring, rising in my consciousness. But I could not track that sensation of beatitude. It came and went, but, like the idea of Spring, the promise of the crocus, and warm winds, it was there even on the blackest days.

I was encircled by love—the ministrations of love, but (oh! this was the sting) love was powerless to lessen the pain; yet from out that wintry thought rose a blossom, the consolation that a

time might come when a sufferer would be sorrier for those "who loved and could not help" than for himself.

Other friends tried to soothe with words: One said, "Pain is nothing, the way you take it is everything." Another urged: "Pain does not exist; it is no attribute of God. He is not conscious of pain and suffering. It is we who imagine it and make it real. We are the victims of æons of wrong thinking. By right thinking, and absolute reliance on Him who is too pure to behold iniquity, you can think yourself out of pain." Another gave me James Hinton's "Mystery of Pain," marking this passage, "All which we feel as painful is really giving." I was told, again, that pain is the complement of love, and I remembered, saying it to myself often, that profound thought of Thomas à Kempis: "Suffering is the terrible initiative caress of God." And I repeated a passage from Keble's "Lectures on Poetry"—so hard, yet so right—"No man can in sorrow charge God with being unjust or hostile to him so long as he has at hand but one blade of grass or one bud upon the trees."

Such tidings toward resignation helped—a little. They engaged the mind in exercise,

stimulated the mysticism that is latent in us all; but the pain continued, in demoniac flux and flow. Just when I seemed to have thought myself into quietude and relief, just when I was going about my mental work, meandering towards happiness, it would lash out again suddenly, any time, anywhere, burning and bruising; and all else, except that damnable fact of pain, continuous pain, was a shadow.

It was worse by night. The dark procession of the hours was so broken, so unnatural, that I laughed aloud in secret at the irony of applying the word repose to those distracted nights. For a month I knew no rest. My doctor, emptied of self, who brought with him the air of the moor and the glint of sunshine, said: "You must sleep. That's the first step to curing you. Tonight I'll give you an injection of morphia, a third of a grain. I'll come at a quarter to ten. Go to bed early and compose yourself." Then he talked of fly-fishing, and in telling him how Charles Marriott and I once tried to catch the Cornish trout, and that we (that is, he) landed a "rainbow" from the Lamorna Stream, I forgot the pain. He is a wise doctor.

I went to bed at half-past nine. The pain was worse; aforetime it had sometimes only ambled;

but that night it jumped and skipped, shied and bolted, and then tugged back into harness. I tried to compose myself. I strove to recall Coleridge's lines: how when he stretched his limbs upon his bed he had no fear, only a sense of benediction—"Since all around me, everywhere, Eternal Love and Wisdom are." But the consolatory message of the poem passed me by. I could do nothing but ask myself doggedly the one dread question, "How much pain can a man bear?"

In the next house somebody was playing "The Blue Danube" valse. I nearly cried, but I think that the impulse was towards self-pity, for often I had danced, not very well, in the three-step days to the "Blue Danube"—without pain. Imagine it—without pain!

Through the open door I could see, in the adjoining bedroom, bathed in a flush of rose-pink light, strangely incongruous, the doctor, sterilising the morphia needle. I watched him, sullenly, without hope, watched the steam from the boiling water, watched his alert movements, stupidly, without hope, for I had tried so many palliatives, and why should the ultimate, this poor last, stop the gnawing pain?

The doctor came briskly into my room, smil-

ing, the needle in his raised hand. He bared my left arm, pinched up the flesh in the upper fleshy part above the elbow joint. I closed my eyes. Ajax prayed that he might be killed in the light. I am not Ajax. I am a peering modern, slowly curing myself of posturing. Give me darkness for pain, or for that relief, sleep's twin-brother, that Walt Whitman called, when he was very fit and strong, "delicate death." But there was no pain—merely a prick. I watched him press and soothe the tiny wound with medicated wool; then my wife tucked me up and kissed me, and the doctor said: "Now go to sleep. Good night." They turned out the lights.

I will try to tell you just what happened so far as I am able. Plotinus, whom Maeterlinck calls "the greatest intellect known to me," has left it on record that he attained three times in his life to ecstatic union with "the One." St. Paul, in that wonderful twelfth chapter of II Corinthians, "knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago (whether in the body I cannot tell, or whether out of the body I cannot tell: God knoweth); such an one caught up to the third heaven."

I cite those master-seers merely as a reminder

of the incalculable, unfathomable things that may happen, and have happened, in the ageless realm-without-end of the unseen. My little adventure, in the land where there is no birth and no death, was the toddling of a child compared with the strides, through ecstasy, of Paul and Plotinus; but in all such experiences, great or little, it is the burden of the flesh that must first be removed, to ease the escape from the unreality of matter to the reality of spirit, by the aid of such tremendous divergencies as, for Paul and Plotinus, a consciousness of the reality of God, and—for me—a little morphia.

The experiences of that night were wonderful. My burden of apprehension fell away, the pain ceased, and I was conscious of a feeling of well-being, indeed of ecstasy, a clairvoyance so complete, so informed with substance, yet so unsubstantial that I was sure, even against the evidence of the morphia (for the prick still pleasantly smarted) that it was born of the spirit, not of the flesh. It happened with incredible quickness; one moment I was in torment, every contact of body with the bed-clothes a heavy ache—then suddenly I was stretching out my limbs in luxury, each exploration of the cool sheets an increasing joy, each movement of the body a drop-

ping into a softer and a more soothing harmony, a harmony of the soul as well as of the body. In that blissful interval when sleep drew near, I was so sure of her kind oncoming that I did not hasten her approach. In perfect trust I waited for sleep to encompass me, and in that blissful interval difficulties, problems that had troubled me vanished. All was clear and radiant; there was no more disharmony—and as sleep closed over me I wondered that anybody, anywhere, could ever have thought that God could be anything but Love.

Did I sleep? I hardly know. It was better than sleep. I had the joy of sleep, but I also was aware, in some mysterious way, that I was asleep and very happy. Surely this may be a foretaste of the one aim of all true mystics—conscious union with God, the real I of Love, the child of God, escaping for awhile, through one of His merciful palliatives, from the dominion of the unreal I, the child of Pain, escaping and in Him abiding—momentarily. In one of the spaces of conscious sleep—and they seemed to recur all through the night—I realised the full significance of those most comforting words of the great Law-giver who kept the faith through all, and who, knowing all, told His people that

"Underneath are the everlasting arms." There they were at that moment waiting for me—incredible tidings! I remembered the story of the child who realised the Everlasting Arms. The memory of the story obsessed me; how one night in church he was so tired, yet so fearful of falling asleep because his father's eyes, that stern, unapproachable father, were fixed upon him, angrily the boy thought. His father moved; the little boy trembled. His father hated laziness and slackness in the face of duty. Then, wonder of wonders, suddenly he was lifted from his seat; his father's arms were underneath him, round him. Thus without fear—indeed with an exquisite joy and in great confidence—the little boy fell asleep in those comprehending arms. So I fell asleep, sank into conscious, ineffable sleep, under me the Everlasting Arms, that night of my awakening. And the morning? What of the morning?

The morning came new again, and with hope. For I had slept, and to sleep is to live. I have had morphia five times since, and I have slept, but never again have the mystical experiences of that first night returned. You cannot fan the spirit into activity. It moves when it will, from hidden tides, whose origin is Eternity. The

action of the morphia has become weaker with each application. The third of a grain has been augmented, but the effect still lessens. To-night I hope (vain hope, it was to hold me bound for two years) to take it for the last time. Its purpose has been fulfilled. It has helped me to jump the rubbish heap of discord, to see the entrance-way of that green meadow of harmony where (this was the fancy of the spiritual schoolmen of old time) those linger, the just not yet made perfect, who are not yet ready to undergo the full effulgence of the Light. I am nearly restored. God and His agent, the poppy of the fields, be praised. Can it be true that suffering is the "terrible initiative caress of God," and that only through suffering can we really attain to Him? I still grope in the dark; but I have seen the gleam, have seen how it may be followed, and when I recall the credible visions of that night, their holy harmony, their quiet and radiant joy, I am certain that if something that is not I, and yet I, can have such experiences while still in the body, what things of incredible beauty and wonder may not happen when we have undergone God's final palliative—Death!

[*As I re-read this confession, written five years*

ago, the presence of my Invisible Guide became more and more intimate, and I heard his voice, ample but low, saying—"As with you there, so with us here, all is clear and radiant, and we, like you, wonder that anybody, anywhere could ever have thought that God could be anything but Love. Press on."]

III

SAFE

BEING restored to health, having awakened to a new understanding of life, having now the companionship of my friend whenever I desired it, because I had learnt how to commune with him, I could dwell with composure on the mighty army, the young, the alert, the radiant who have given their lives for England and for freedom. I was happy, because deep in my soul I had the consciousness, the assurance that they are safe, that we are still with them, and they with us, loving and guiding all who support the struggle on earth. They are alive. These gallant dead have never died. We think of them with joy, not with grief, day by day, hour by hour, in the street, in the heart. So when the idea of erecting little shrines in our streets to our beloved took practical shape, and grew and grew, I busied myself with arranging for a shrine in the district which for me is ever hallowed with the earth-life of Jimmy.

*   *   *   *   *   *

It is Gothic in form and quite simple. Above are the words:—

Roll of Honour
—— Shrine
Pray for Them
These men left —— to serve their
King and Country in the Great
War for Freedom

Then follow the names inscribed on vellum, under a hinged-glass door, and against some is placed a small cross surmounted by a crown; against others the words: "Prisoner," or "Disabled." Beneath is a ledge for flowers. They must be garden-grown or wild, they must not be purchased, and residents in the district will tend them, in rotation, a week at a time.

I was talking of the idea of these shrines to a peasant woman who had lost her son, and her comment was, "It is well." Presently she said, quite happily and confidently, "The boy is safe." I looked at her with reverence. Then I told her of the soldier-poet, Rupert Brooke, who died for England; told her of that second of his immortal sonnets. "He called it—Safety," I said.

Next day I went to London to visit some of the shrines in the streets, and also to see a Roll of

Honour, designed by Mr. Graily Hewitt, for the parish of Ickham, Kent. It is just right. The names are beautifully written (he is a professional caligraphist) on a sheet of uncut parchment, which is framed, and bears the inscription:—

> "These Served the King in
> the year of our Lord 1914"

But this is for an interior, a church, in a place secure from the elements. The attraction, the universal appeal of the People's War Shrines, is that they are placed in the open, in street or crossways, so that those going about their daily work may encounter them suddenly and be moved to doff the cap or murmur a prayer of gratitude, perhaps to kneel. Thus the spiritual world mingles, as it always should, with the material.

Thinking in silent gladness of this symbol of faith that has sprung from the hearts of the people, I chanced to learn that the exhibition of War Shrines at Selfridge's had been extended for another week. Thither I hurried, the time being about an hour before sunset, and the weather radiant.

Through the crowded ground floor, by the

crowded lift, I ascended to the fourth floor, and there in the Palm Court, among the Shrines on either side of the organ, I found a sudden quietness. It was almost like being in church. (A church in a shop! Think of it. Strange things happen in this war!) Hats were lifted, faces grew fond, a discovery was stealing over them—

I am Love. I am terribly slow.
I require all time to grow.
I am All you will ever know.

Moved, I went away. My steps led me down a passage, up a slight ascent, and I found myself in what I must describe as the most wonderful place in the metropolis. It is called the Roof Garden. All around, far below, spread and growled our mighty London. Such a sight may be seen from the Monument, or St. Paul's, but there you are confined, a biped in a cage; here you are virtually as free as the birds, for the walks are spacious and diversified, with shrubs and alleys, and there is a sense of security under the vast sky.

Far below, in little and big streets, beyond sight, beyond hearing, everywhere, shrines have already been placed: and there, towards the west, is Westminster, where I hope one day to

see that great National Shrine, of which these innumerable little shrines are the outposts.

I saw in the highway of the spiritual imagination that great National Shrine completed, as I paced that Roof Garden high above London, when the sun was sinking in the west. All at once there came to me—it seemed to proceed from a Presence, lingering above London, reluctant to leave his earth home, the Presence of that soldier-poet, Rupert Brooke, who went west for England. And to me came, as from someone speaking close by, his last words to the world in his sonnet called "Safety":

We have built a house that is not for Time's throwing,
We have gained a peace unshaken by pain for ever.
War knows no power. Safe shall be my going,
Secretly armed against all death's endeavour;
Safe though all safety's lost; safe where men fall;
And if these poor limbs die, safest of all.

Some know that the idea expressed in these lines is a gleam of eternal truth; others may consider them a soporific invented by the ingenious brain of man to allay the intermittent pain of life. I, like a greater, am on the side of the angels, and on the side of that old peasant woman who said, "*The boy is safe.*"

[*And the voice of The Invisible Guide continued—"Safe—because there can be no danger and no satiety where Love is. This, the old peasant woman knew because she was pure in heart. We, who have left you for a little while, have built a house that is not for Time's throwing. The boy is Safe."*]

IV

A FELLOWSHIP OF THE FALLEN

THIS is what I saw on the highway of the spiritual imagination as I paced the Roof Garden. It took shape because I asked myself this question: What shall we do for the Fallen who have risen and abide? What shall we do for those who have given their lives for the Motherland, and for us, by land and by sea, through whose heroism and sacrifice ever inviolate is this happy breed of men, this blessed plot, this earth, this realm, this England? What shall we do for the Fallen who have Risen and abide?

While I was reading a leading article on the advantages of moving Charing Cross Station to the Surrey side, and throwing across the Thames a magnificent Empire Bridge, the question was answered. Here shall arise our Imperial Memorial of Gratitude to the Fallen, and Pride in the Empire.

With that glorious scheme many of us had busied ourselves in pre-war days. Now it has

taken on a wider and a far deeper significance.

The advantages of this reconstruction are almost too obvious to be stated. The south side of the river, already in the way of becoming magnificent, in one corner, through the erection of the new County Council Hall, will at last have its own Embankment, and the name should be the Edward Embankment. It will present a vista of palaces and gardens from Westminster to Waterloo Bridge, thus making the Surrey frontage of the Thames as palatial as the Middlesex frontage, and uniting North and South London into one organic whole. Waterloo and the new Charing Cross Station will adjoin each other on the Surrey side, feed each other with passengers, and be the great termini of traffic for South and West England. The approaches to the new bridge from either side will be transformed into wide spaces and spacious gardens. The new Empire Bridge, crossing the immemorial river, will lead to Imperial Avenue, there joined by two other great arteries of traffic from Westminster and Waterloo Bridges, it will converge into Imperial Place. Thus will be formed a real centre of London, the first city of the Empire, a new London, of which Empire Place and Empire Bridge will be the symbols.

Look ahead seven years. Here is the dream which must come true. You will start from Buckingham Palace; you will drive down the historic Mall; you will emerge through the gates to find the crowding buildings on either side swept away, with gardens there and statues and fountains; you will sweep round to Northumberland Avenue, passing on the way Le Sœur's superb statue of Charles I, turned so as to be in alignment with this new highway, facing towards the new Bridge (all forgiven and forgotten, an English King silently in line with England and the Empire); you will ascend the new Northumberland Avenue, see its arms opening, Embankment Gardens on either side, and here at the approach to the great bridge, rising above the traffic and the trams there will be an open space—Empire Place. This will be the centre of the new Imperial London. Here where the great bridge begins to stretch over the old river, with the Cross of St. Paul's shining to the east, and the towers of the Mother of Parliaments looming in the west—a real Thames-side London at last.

It is no dream. The scheme has been discussed and planned. For years men have worked for it. The Royal Institute of British

Architects, the London Society, Mr. John Burns, Sir Aston Webb, Professor Beresford Pite, Mr. Paul Waterhouse, Lord Leverholme, have all realised the dream, and have pushed the business forward. In a recent exhibition of the Royal Academy, in the place of honour in the Architectural Room, which so few visit, but wherein vast architectural ideas which affect us all are being materialised, the whole scheme was set forth pictorially by two talented architects—Mr. D. Barclay Niven and Mr. T. Raffles Davison.

But, it may be asked, what has this scheme, splendid though it seems, to do with a Fellowship of the Fallen? Have a little patience.

Various proposals as to the working out of the scheme have been made, but all the writers are agreed that the hideous Charing Cross Railway Bridge must be scrapped, that the station must be removed to the Surrey side, adjoining the Waterloo terminus, and that the new bridge and Imperial highway should take the form of a national memorial. Suggestions are many and confused. Some want a high-level instead of a low-level bridge; others a double-decked bridge; some a Belvedere with booths in the centre of the bridge; and one writer actually pleads for the retention of the wharves on the Surrey side.

All such matters can be discussed later. Our aim now, this moment, is to agree upon the principle, the idea that this vast improvement in Thames-side London should be an Imperial matter, a testimony to the consolidation of the Empire, of our gratitude to the Dominions beyond the seas, and our love for our soldiers, sailors, and airmen who have died for righteousness and freedom. As the idea is so vast and so outbranching I may be allowed to recapitulate the wide-flung aims of this Imperial Memorial and plead again for the unity of this comprehensive scheme, the heart, the impulse of which is our gratitude to the Fallen.

Is it not plain that this great Imperial Memorial might include in one vast town-planning dream all the projects for improvements and memorials now before the public?

1. The Channel Tunnel.
2. The Memorial to King Edward.
3. The Memorials to Lord Roberts and Lord Kitchener.
4. The Kitchener Home for Disabled Officers.
5. An Imperial Club.
6. A Memorial to the Fallen.

Let me first take the Memorial to the Fallen project, because it lifts the scheme out of a mere

town-planning proposal, however grand and far-reaching, into a sacred and joyful duty in which every member of the Empire can share, every man, woman and child who proudly mourns a soldier or a sailor or airman. This could be achieved by erecting on the high ground in Empire Place, or near by, where Northumberland Avenue ascends towards Empire Bridge—the suggested name for the new low-level bridge of five spans with a width of one hundred and twenty feet—a Memorial Chapel, dedicated to those who had died for their country. It should be small, but high, very simple, very beautiful, this shrine on a little hill, a place of peace in the highway of traffic, a consecrated spot above the Thames in the heart of London and the Empire, within view of the cross of St. Paul's and the towers of the Mother of Parliaments. Beyond, in line with the Chapel, would stretch the great bridge, joining North and South London, a symbol of union and equality, for the scheme proposes to make the Southern side as beautiful, wholesome and memorable as the Northern.

In the centre of the chapel I would place a plain cross, and on it I would rest a crown. For the heart of man, whatever his shade of belief, has through the ages devised no symbols

more appropriate to his undying hope than those of the Cross and the Crown. On the base of the cross I would insert in letters of gold these lines, by an English poet—Laurence Binyon—that are now the companions, bringing exceeding comfort, to a multitude:

They shall not grow old as we that are left grow old;
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn:
At the going down of the sun and in the morning
We will remember them.

And on the wall of the chapel, oriented to take the first rays of the rising sun on Empire Day, I would inset, in letters of gold, the plain statement that: "This chapel, the centre of the great Imperial scheme for broadening and beautifying the first city of the Empire, is dedicated to our beloved, the flower of the Old Country, and the Dominions beyond the seas, who fell in the great war for Freedom."

Wide, ascending subways, radiating from the adjacent pavements, would lead up to this shrine, and, on the walls of these bright subways all the cities, towns, and villages of the Empire would be invited to fix memorial tablets to those resident in their neighbourhood who have made the great sacrifice and have given their lives for their

country. Thus, in Lowell's strong, trembling lines, the whole Empire would perpetually—

> . . . Salute the sacred dead,
> Beautiful evermore, and with the rays
> Of morn on their white shields of Expectation.

Above the chapel I would have a flag flying always, broidered with the sixty-four flags of the Empire, and, once a year, on Empire Day, it would be taken down, and a new flag, similar in design, would be raised in its place; and the flag that had served its proud year would be presented to a city of the Empire.

So that all may share in this testimony of gratitude and gladness, I have suggested the formation of a Fellowship of the Fallen; that we allot seven years to the completion of this Imperial epic in town-planning—the *Builder* considers that the whole improvement might be completed in four years—that each year, on Empire Day, each member of the Fellowship of the Fallen shall agree to subscribe one guinea, and to continue his subscription for seven years. So shall we honour the spirit and sacrifice of the British race.

This shrine is the heart which will vitalise the out-stretching limbs of this Imperial Memorial.

Into it comes naturally the making of the Channel Tunnel—that symbol of our faith and confidence in our great Ally. In the years to come Charing Cross Station, the new Charing Cross on the Surrey side, will be the London terminus of an immense Continental traffic—Charing Cross to Bagdad, Petrograd to Charing Cross—and Empire Bridge will be the great highway along which all must pass into Imperial London. Station and bridge are one with the Channel Tunnel, the Chapel and the Statues, and each must be worthy of this great adventure of Peace—this Imperial Memorial.

The other projects for memorials and improvements stand out in array, pleading for inclusion in the vast unity. Behind the Embankment Gardens, between the Chapel and the Hotel Cecil, a beautiful shallow crescent of new buildings is proposed (see "A Design for the Improvement of Charing Cross," by D. Barclay Niven and T. Raffles Davison). Here might be placed, and no vista could be more appropriate or more delightful, the Kitchener Home for Disabled Officers, included in the Kitchener Memorial Fund, which has already made so fine a beginning; here, too, could stand the new Imperial

Club—with Mr. Hughes as the first chairman—and a noble hall for meetings.

On the two pylons at the approach to Empire Bridge on the Middlesex side, would stand imposing memorials to Lord Kitchener and Lord Roberts; on the two pylons on the Surrey side, I suggest groups symbolising the gratitude of the Empire to her Dominions beyond the seas. In the pedestal of the Kitchener statue the famous letter might be inserted under glass, with a sentinel, one of Kitchener's army, perpetually guarding it.

The high ground at the approach to Empire Bridge on the Surrey side, corresponding to Empire Place on the Middlesex side, should be called King Edward Place. There would stand his statue, with embellishments, looking towards the great bridge, typifying the united and victorious Empire he strove to save from the horrors of war. To the right would stretch the new Edward Embankment, and there the South-Eastern Railway could build the finest hotel in the world, facing the river, and connected by subways with the station; to the left hand would sweep the West wing of the Edward Embankment, linking the new County Council Hall to the King Edward Memorial. Here, surely, is a worthy monument

to Edward the Peacemaker. Nobody takes the slightest interest in the Waterloo Place site for the King Edward statue. It touches no imagination, it signifies nothing. But the memorial which I have proposed places him where he would have desired to have been, among his people, sharing their cross and their crown, their sorrow and their victory, facing the symbol of the new Empire which, we may well believe, he still watches and guides. Where would he choose to be rather than here, in this venerable and memory-haunted spot, between Westminster and Waterloo, above Father Thames, the child of our hills, the vassal of our ocean, the sire of the island race that rules the seven seas, flowing here before we were, flowing when we are gone?

Him, our seventh Edward, I see in a dream, standing there grave, glad, and watchful, facing the shrine, dedicated to his soldiers, sailors, and airmen, who died to save their Motherland. I see, above the Chapel, between the cross of St. Paul's and the towers of the Mother of Parliaments, the banner with the sixty-four flags proclaiming unity and the ideals for which our beloved fought and died—Fellowship, Freedom, God. This National Memorial will eternally salute our sacred dead—"straight of limb, true

of eye, steady and aglow." Gone—but they shall not grow old, as we that are left grow old. Neither shall we of the Fellowship of the Fallen, beholding this Imperial Memorial, grow ever old in remembering them.

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[*In the voice of The Invisible Guide there was a note of pity. "It is all well meant," he said, "this human vision of pomp, circumstance and memory; but, oh, is not the spiritual idea of the Fallen who have Arisen enough? Understand that Love is spiritual, and you understand all. Understand! That is enough."*]

V

ANOTHER DAWN ON ROOF HILL

ONE morning I received this postcard from Jimmy's brother—"Have raised our first crop of intensive peas, weeks before the common or garden farmers. Am bounding with hope! Dad going strong! Meet me at the Convalescent Home at four o'clock to-morrow. I shall go straight from the garden in a cab, so you musn't mind my filthy condition."

I called at the Convalescent Home at the hour of three, as I wished to have a talk with Papa Carstairs before Jimmy's brother's arrival; and found the old man pacing slowly up and down the room, looking like a valeted lion. His hair and beard had been trimmed; he wore a periwinkle blue silk dressing-gown, and he looked ten years younger.

He grasped my hand. I winced at the strength of his clutch. "For two years I haven't walked like this," he said, in his deep base. "That boy is a genius. The enemy is defeated. Butler tells me that the boy's diagnosis was cor-

rect in every particular. I suffered no pain after the operation; I have suffered no pain since. The procedure was as undeviating as the compass. But I must not overtax my strength. With your permission I will rest awhile."

He reclined on the bed, motionless as a king carved in alabaster; but there was something above kingliness in his look. Had he not been so recently valeted he would have been the ideal model for a Hebrew prophet. And with the rejuvenation of his body his tongue had loosened. The man of silence, under the shock of health, had become garrulous.

"We shall have to call the boy by his baptismal name," said the old man. "He has made good: he shall no longer be known as Jimmy's brother, my Jimmy, my first-born, the lover of my life, my soldier-saint. He will not grow old as we that are left grow old. But the younger boy has made good. He has Jimmy's purity of heart, but not his depth. It was because the boy was pure in heart that he entered the kingdom of knowledge against all those surgeon experts who mishandled me. If he has the utterance of a *gamin* he has the heart of a child, that is why he prevailed. As Francis Bacon says. '*Regnum Scientiæ ut regnum Coeli non nisi sub*

persona infantis intratur'—Into the Kingdom of Knowledge, as into the Kingdom of Heaven, whoso would enter must become as a little child."

As I assented a cab drove up to the door, and, looking through the window, I perceived Jimmy's brother alighting with a hamper. Seeing me he shouted "Peas for Dad!" and rang the bell violently.

He entered the room, odoriferous with intensive culture; his waterproof knee-boots (the real and the artificial leg were each encased) left dabs of mud upon the carpet, but he was, as he would say, "in the pink." His father gazed at him with wondering eyes; then he said, "Listen, my boy."

Jimmy's brother and I sat huddled in our deep chairs, I attentive, he restless, while the old man delivered a prose-poem on the meaning of life and the unreality of death—partly his own, partly quotation. "Listen, O isles unto me: and hearken, ye people, from far . . . I have laboured in vain, I have spent my strength for nought, and in vain; yet surely my judgment is with the Lord, and my work with my God."

It might have been Isaiah speaking.

Then he called us to him, and placed a hand on either of our heads and blessed us, and said—

"Thou hast made us for Thyself and our heart knows no rest until it rests in Thee." But you must find the way step by step. Jimmy shows the way upwards to the Master.

Turning to Jimmy's brother he said, "You have a great gift. Use it as Jimmy would have employed such a gift. Cultivate him: he will be with you, as I shall, if you direct your thoughts rightly."

Jimmy's brother writhed, and at the first opportunity scrambled to his feet and presented the basket of peas.

He kissed his father. The old man conducted us to the head of the stairs, and as we descended he kicked out his legs to emphasise their power of movement.

Jimmy's brother dropped me at Waterloo. He was silent on the journey, but before we parted he recovered his spirits and said—"Dad's another of your Luka Johnnies, isn't he?"

* * * * * *

A feeling of elation possessed me on the homeward journey, a sensation of profound peace and promise. I took a circuitous path through the woods. All the way I thought of Jimmy, and was able to converse with him.

Through a long evening I re-read his letters

and Diary, and looked at his pictures, and after midnight I left the house and took the familiar walk to the summit of Roof Hill. Emotion had been quite weaned from me. Patiently, persistently I affirmed the presence of Jimmy and all who have passed on, and denied the power of the act of death to arrest the development of spiritual activities: patiently, persistently I asserted that evil has no dominion over the ageless, deathless power of spirit. In such sane conversation the hours passed.

I paced the hill, but I was no longer a Sentinel, I was the companion of an Invisible Host, and near, so near, quickening and encouraging me was my Invisible Guide.

Dawn came. I was composed and happy, unfatigued, ready for the day. I spoke three words aloud—"Jimmy, I understand."

THE END